SINCLAIR user

JUNE 1988 No 75 HFL 7.90

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WE WOULD JUST LIKE TO APOLOGISE TO ALL THOSE OTHER MAGAZINES WITH TAPES THIS MONTH FOR MAKING THEIR TAPES LOOK EMBARRASSINGLY POOR. SORRY.

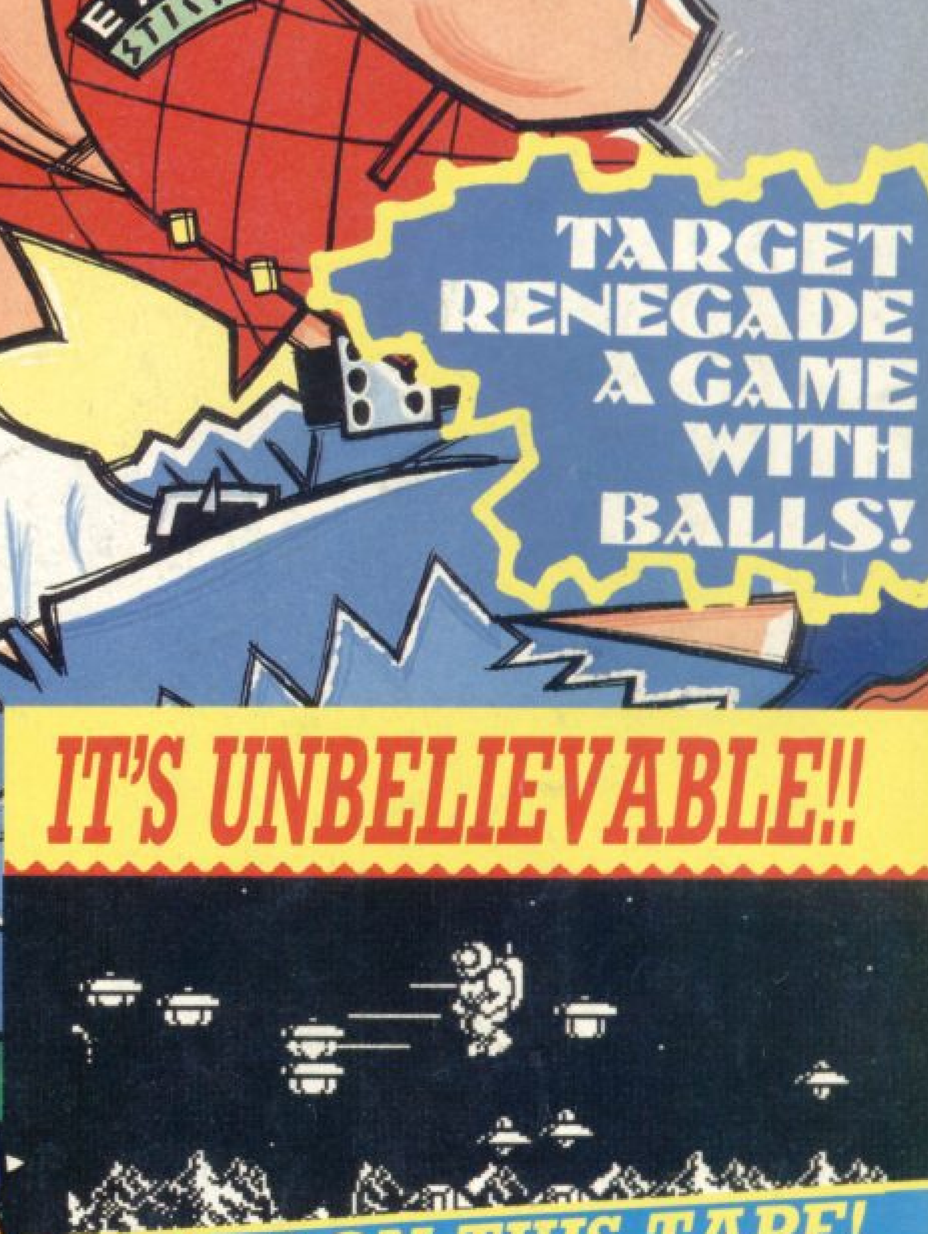


TARGET RENEGADE A GAME WITH BALLS!

(MKS OTHR MGS GMS LK LIK COMPLTE CRP!)

IF NO TAPE IS ATTACHED HERE TELL YOUR NEWSAGENT IMMEDIATELY!

IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!!



ONLY ON THIS TAPE!

SEE PAGE 10!

HYPER ACTIVE BY SPECIAL FX
BEST COVER TAPE GAME EVER!
DROOL OVER THE GRAPHICS!
LOTS OF LEVELS! 128K SOUND!
+20 BRAND NEW POKES!
+SKATE CRAZY BY GREMLIN
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Phone: **01-251 6222** Fax: **01-608 2696** SUBSCRIPTIONS: **PO Box 500, Leicester LE99 0AA 0858 34567 24 Hour Orderline: 0858 410510 Back Issues: SU EMAP Frontline Ltd, 1 Lincoln Court, Lincoln Road, Peterborough PE1 2RP 0733 555161** EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISEMENT OFFICES **Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU**

THIS MONTH'S COVER **Clive Goodyear**

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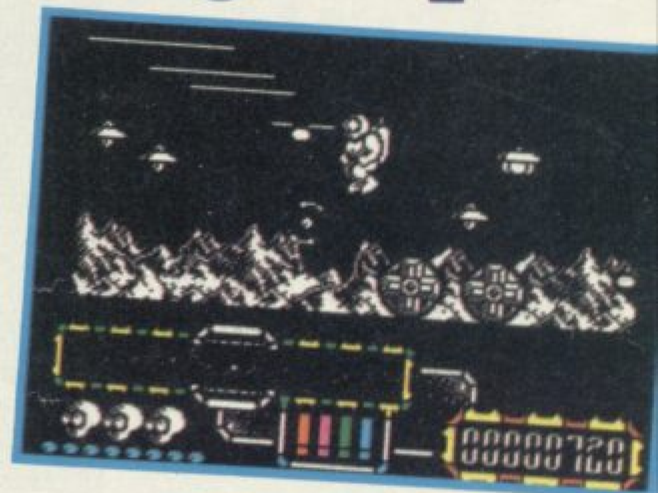
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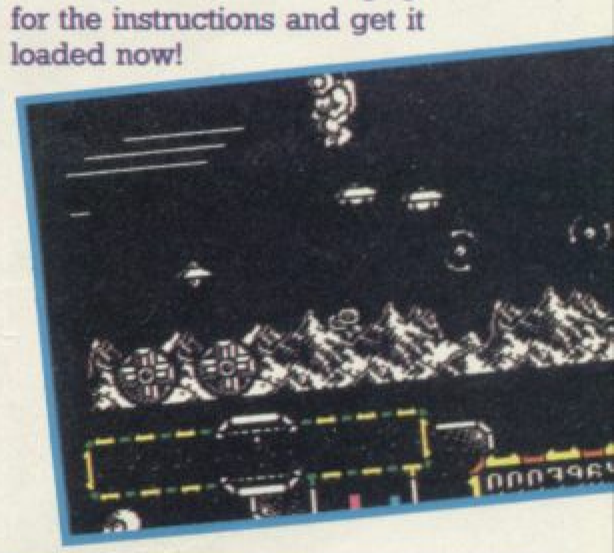


TENTS

Megatape 4



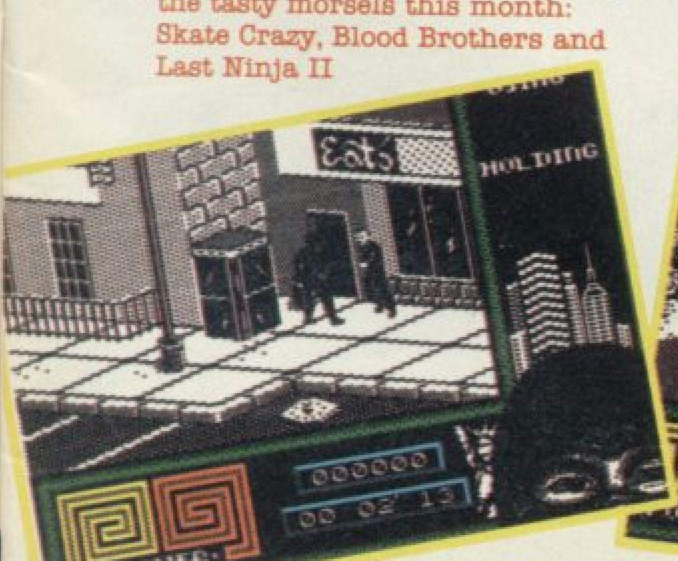
Listen, we're not stupid. We know that absolutely every mag out there is telling you their tape is best but HONESTLY when we saw what Special FX had done for Tape 4 we were stunned. You won't believe a game which effectively costs 50p (and that's forgetting the playable demo and the Pokes) could be this good. Come to think of it, what are you reading this for? Turn to page 10 for the instructions and get it loaded now!





SOFTWARE



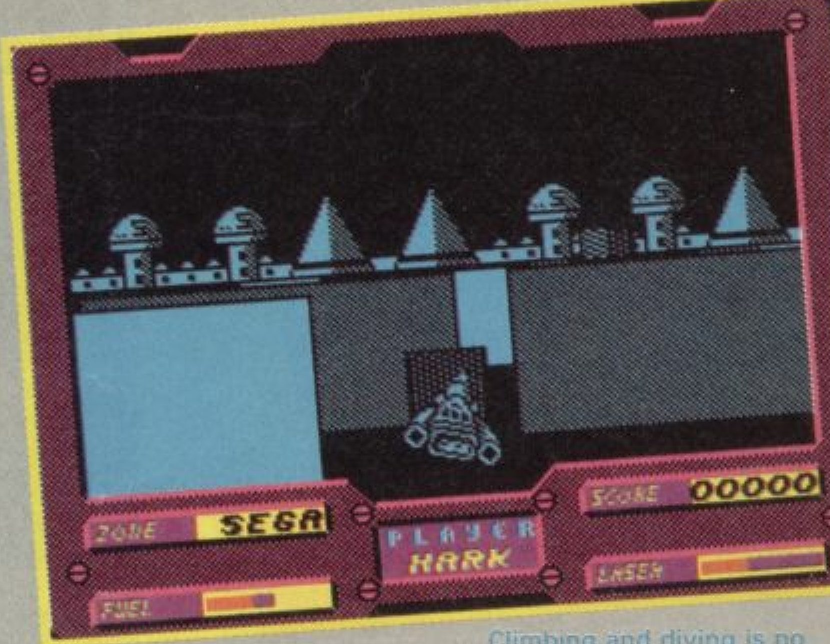




REGULARS

Have I . . . (gasp, pant) Have I made it? Am I in (wheeze) time for June? (gulp). Yes? I know this one's in Preview, but well (cough, splutter) it's sooo good we wanted to show you right away, and I've run all the way from Birmingham . . .

ARCADE REVIEW



FAXBOX

Well above average arcade-adventure with emphasis on the arcade. Climb aboard yer jetbike

BLOOD BROTHERS
Label: Gremlin
Author: S. Marsden and D. Cooke
Price: £7.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Tony Dillon
★★★★☆ 8

BLOOD BROTHERS

Blood Brothers is yet another spacey-shooty-ouch-that-hurty-collecty arcade adventure. And despite that fact it is flamin' excellent!

You play one member of a huge team (well, 2) and you have to penetrate each of the 3 modules of the game and collect all of the gems. Easy peasy. Not so. At the time of writing, I've yet to complete a module, and I've been playing it for more than a few hours.

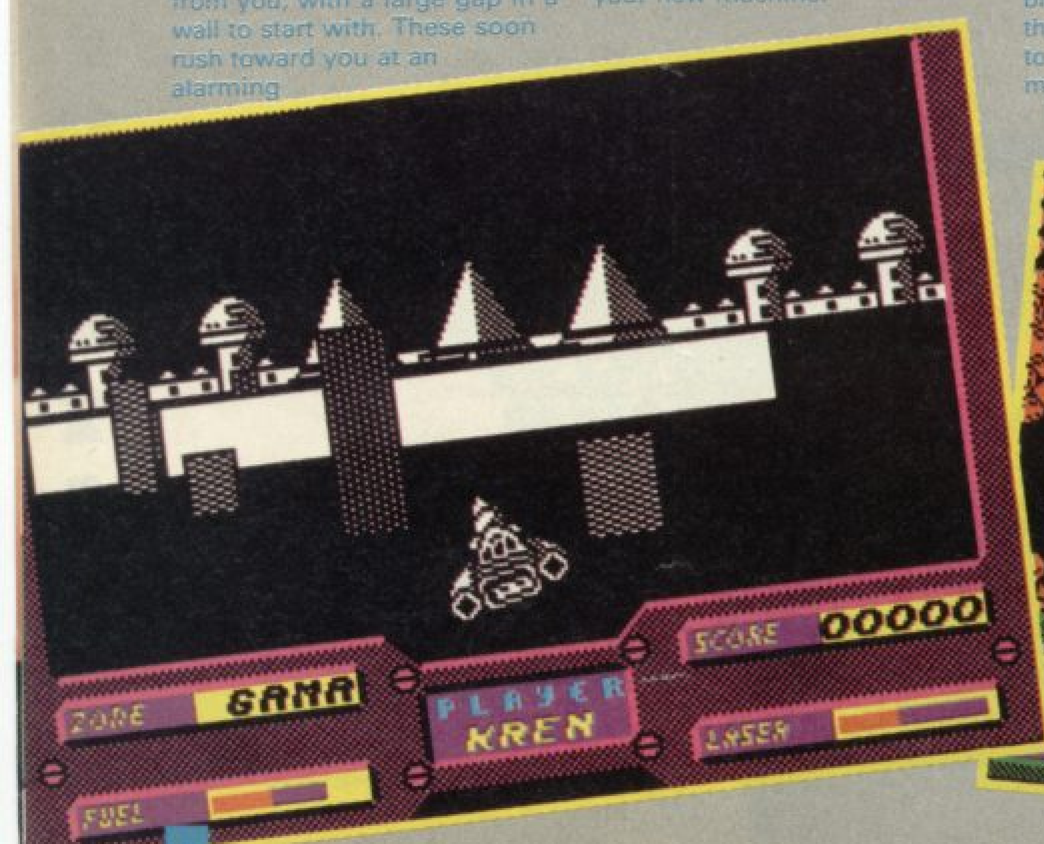
Before you can start collecting all the gems and bits and bobs (more of those later), you have to atcherley *get* to your module, and to do this, you have to get through the dreaded 3-D flight on a jetbike through a slabs and wall sequence. You are viewed from behind and slightly above, looking over your own shoulder, so to speak. The walls and slabs start a short distance from you, with a large gap in a wall to start with. These soon rush toward you at an alarming rate, and when I say alarming, I mean these self-abusers are FAST! You have to steer your little bike around and over obstacles, looking for the entrance to the module, which looks like a curtain of snow on a black background. Finding it is one thing, steering into it is another. It takes an extraordinary amount of time to get used to the road handling of your new machine.

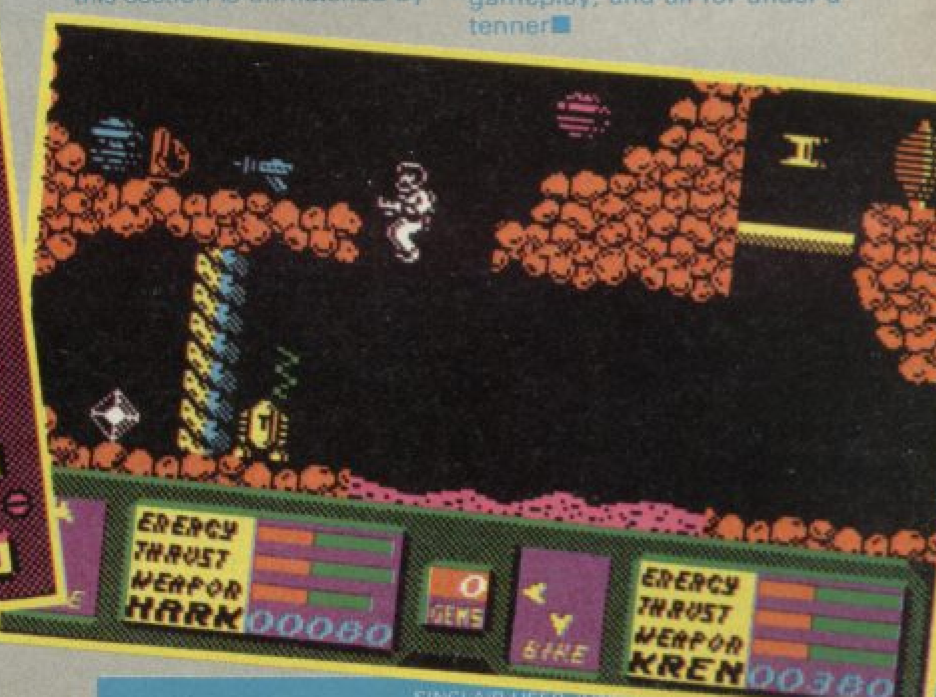
Climbing and diving is no hassle, but the left and right steering is a right royal pain. The bike nips from left to right quite nattily, but inertia ensures that it doesn't change its course back to flying straight immediately. So you usually end up overshooting the hole in the wall you were aiming for, and crash into the large expanse of brick next to it. Not that that has any drastic effect. All it does is send you back to the start of the sequence. No big deal if you crash early in the game, but it's when you're nearing the entrance of the module that you tend to cry with frustration. The worst bit about this sequence is that it costs you fuel. Once you run out of fuel, you lose control of the bike, and inevitably crash into the next wall, which causes you to explode in a glorious manner.

The whole graphical feel of this section is unmatched by any other kind of 3-D flying thingy ever. The scrolling is amazingly smooth, and the enlargement of distant objects is done very well indeed. Just one minor bug. It's difficult in places to tell whether you have passed an object or not. Of course, the obvious solution to that is to blow it up. Yes, you can blow things up as well!

Once through this bit, you're into the module and it's platform time again. Praise the Lord (OOoooooh, yeeeeeaaaah!), this one is good. Controlling your little sprite with his little jet pack you have to fly around some caverns shooting lots of strange shaped things and collecting gems, extra bullets, extra fuel and extra laser power.

I can see **Blood Brothers** being very popular in the near future. It has everything a good game needs, good graphics, good sound, great payability, a good few hours of addictive gameplay, and all for under a tenner■





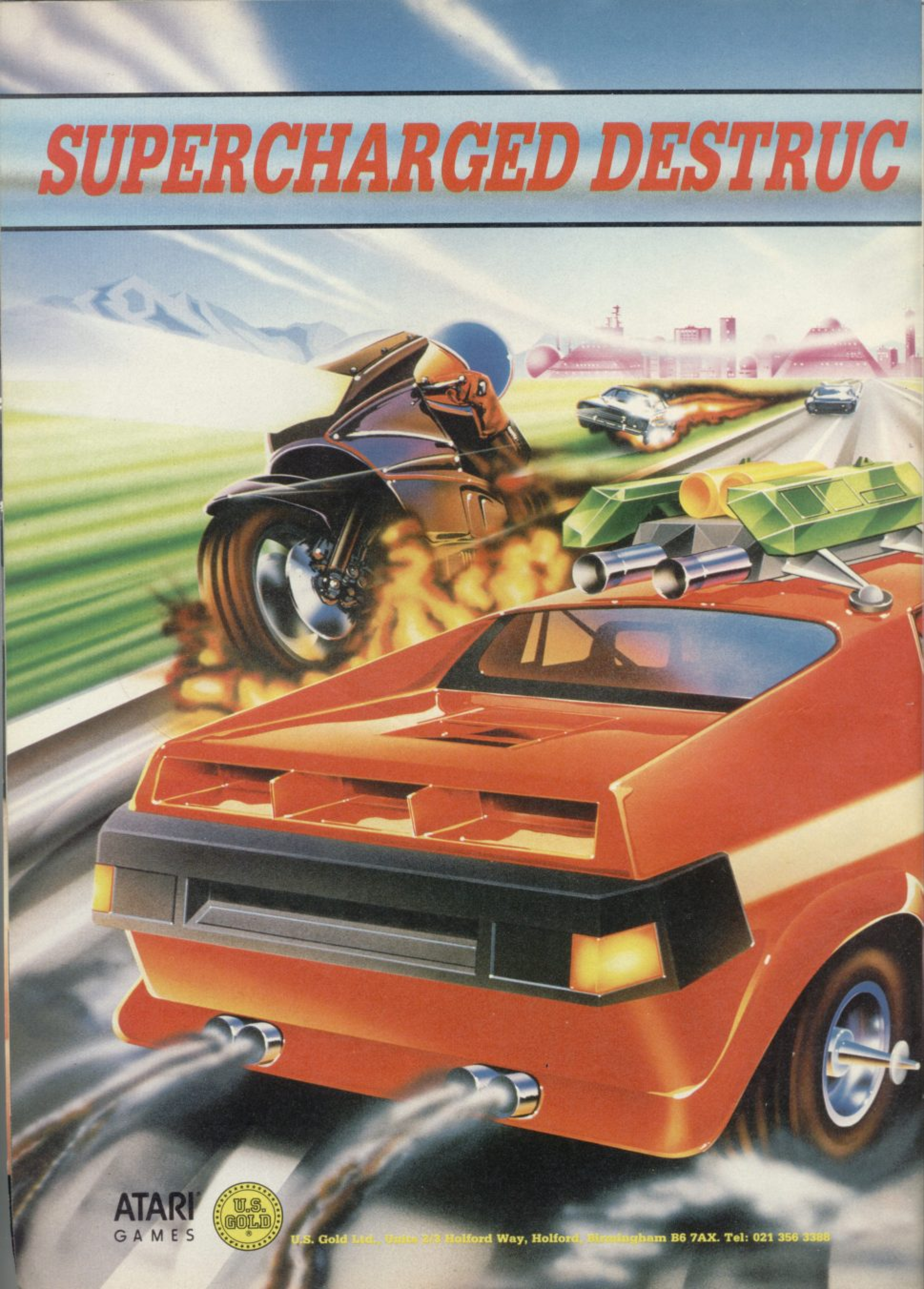
BURNING WITH EXCITEMENT???



We defy you to take up the challenge...Go on... Pick up the Keys...

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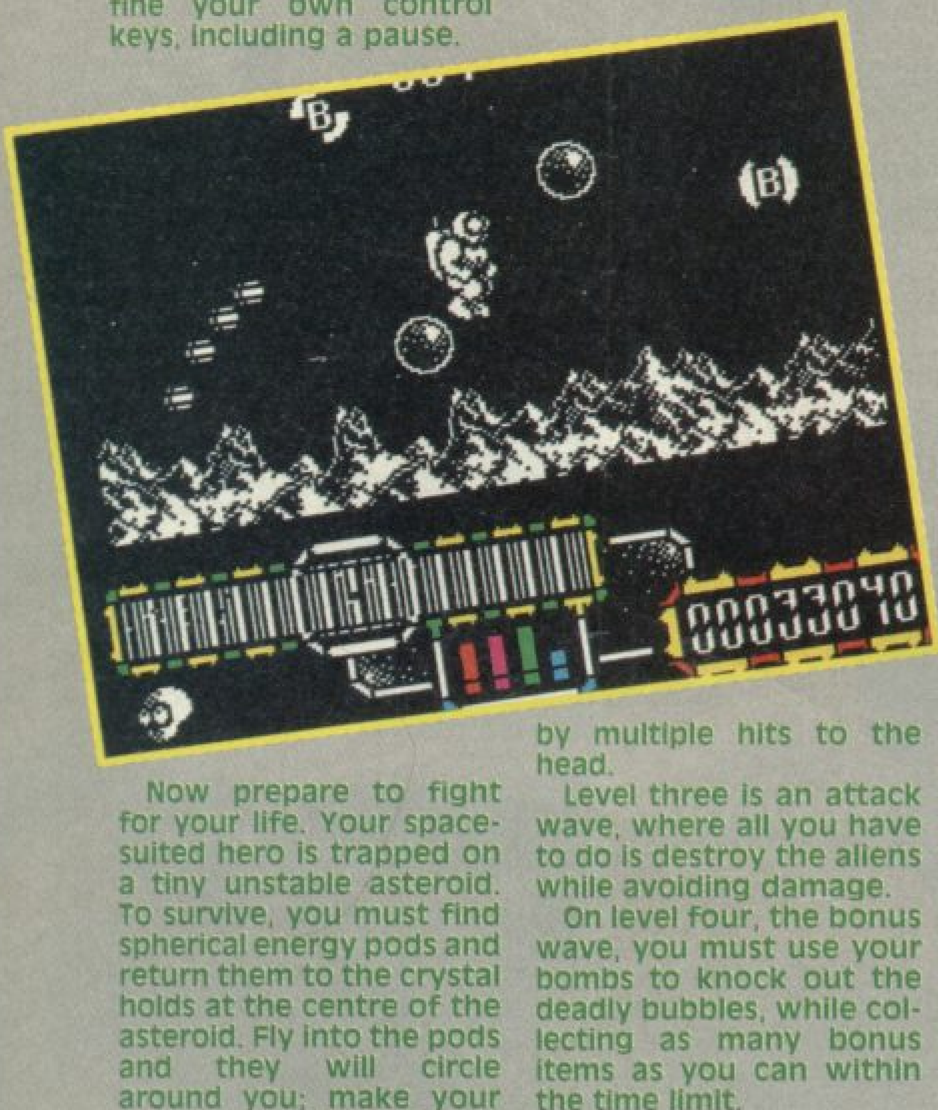


TION...
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RoadBlasters
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U.S. GOLD
from Commodore version
The thunderous world of destruction ... the ultimate race against death, Roadblasters delivers all the gripping action and high speed thrills of the arcade spectacular.
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Spectrum 48/128K £8.99t
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Atari ST £19.99d

HYPER ACTIVE – THE GAME INSTRUCTIONS

This month's Megagame, *Hyper Active*, features such amazing music, effects and gameplay that you'll never believe it comes sellotaped to the cover of SU. Special FX Software has laboured hard to make *Hyper Active* a great blast with all the features of a full-price game.

Hyper Active is compatible with Sinclair, Kempston and cursor joysticks. You can also play using the keyboard, using keys Q (up), A (down), O (left), P (right), and M (fire), or define your own control keys, including a pause.



Now prepare to fight for your life. Your spacesuited hero is trapped on a tiny unstable asteroid. To survive, you must find spherical energy pods and return them to the crystal holds at the centre of the asteroid. Fly into the pods and they will circle around you; make your way back to the hold and manoeuvre the pod into it. Then go off after another one.

Use the scanner at the bottom of the screen to locate pods. When you have collected all eight, destroy the remaining aliens to complete the level.

There are millions of aliens, all of whom hate smelly, pod-stealing spacemen. If you hang around too long, they'll be joined by a homing saucer which is even faster and more vicious.

The next level, the Dragon Wave, features four wriggly space-snakes which can only be kille by multiple hits to the head.

Level three is an attack wave, where all you have to do is destroy the aliens while avoiding damage.

On level four, the bonus wave, you must use your bombs to knock out the deadly bubbles, while collecting as many bonus items as you can within the time limit.

After that the waves repeat, getting harder and harder each time.



HINTS AND TIPS

- Keep a close eye on your radar display to locate aliens and pods.
- The row of helmets shows the number of lives left, and the status bars your rapid fire, shield, radar and laser energy supplies. If any of these fall too low, you may lose functions of any of these weapons.
- Don't leave pod collecting until last on a survival wave, or the homing saucers will get you!

MEGA TAPE 4

ABOUT SPECIAL FX

So, what's all this excitement about *Special FX*? How has a small development house made such a big impact in one short year?

***Special FX* was founded by Liverpool lad Paul Finnegan. Paul worked for Imagine in the early days of the legendary software house, then moved to Ocean in 1984. Last year, though, it was back to good old Liverpool, and a new headquarters in the Albert Dock complex. Why Liverpool? "I've always believed there's great programming talent in Liverpool, and it's a great environment to work in," commented Paul.**

Co-director of *Special FX* is 21-year-old Jonathan Smith, who joined Ocean straight from school and produced some little scorchers like Hypersports, Cobra **and** Mikie. **Jonathan does all his own graphics, and he's now got 11 other people to help him out!**

First *Special FX* project, Hysteria, **was sold to Software Projects in late '87. Since then the team has been thundering away turning out great stuff including** Firefly, **which was marketed by Ocean on the *Special FX* label, and** Gutz, **Which is Previewed in this ish.**

Apart from producing the unbelievably megabrill Hyper Active **for SU, *Special FX* is working on more Spectrum Games for Ocean, as well as a series of innovative 16-bit games, the first of which is due out in late '88.**

So now you know the fax behind *FX* (Who wrote this bilge? – GT) get on and play Hyper Active!!

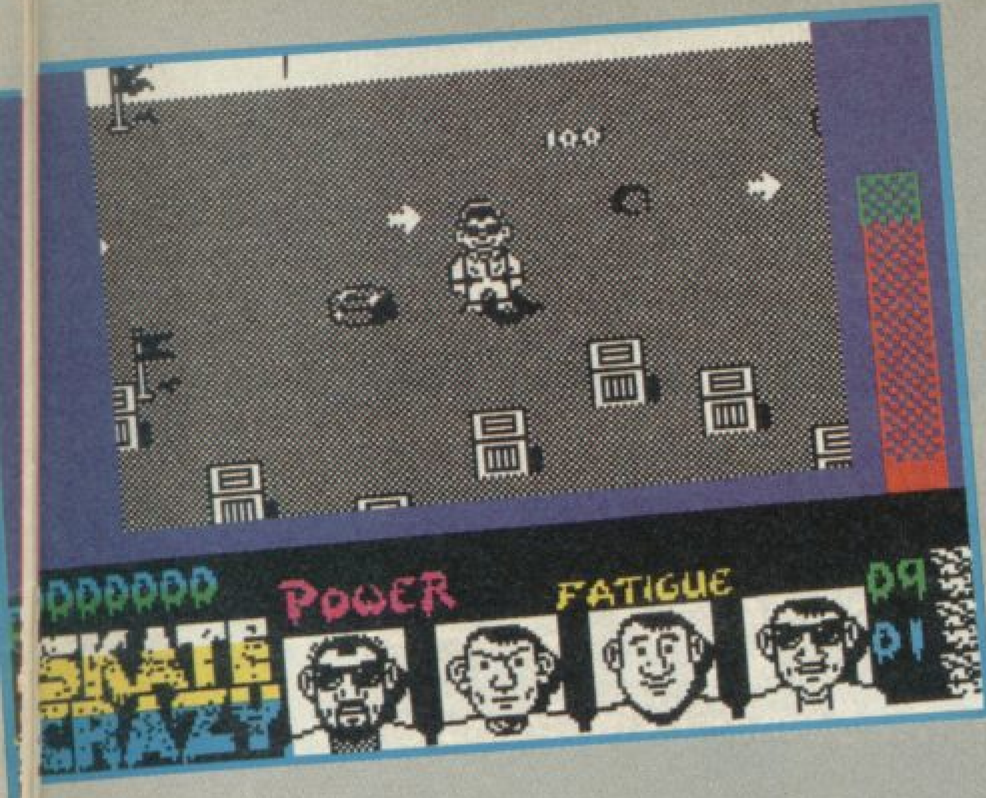


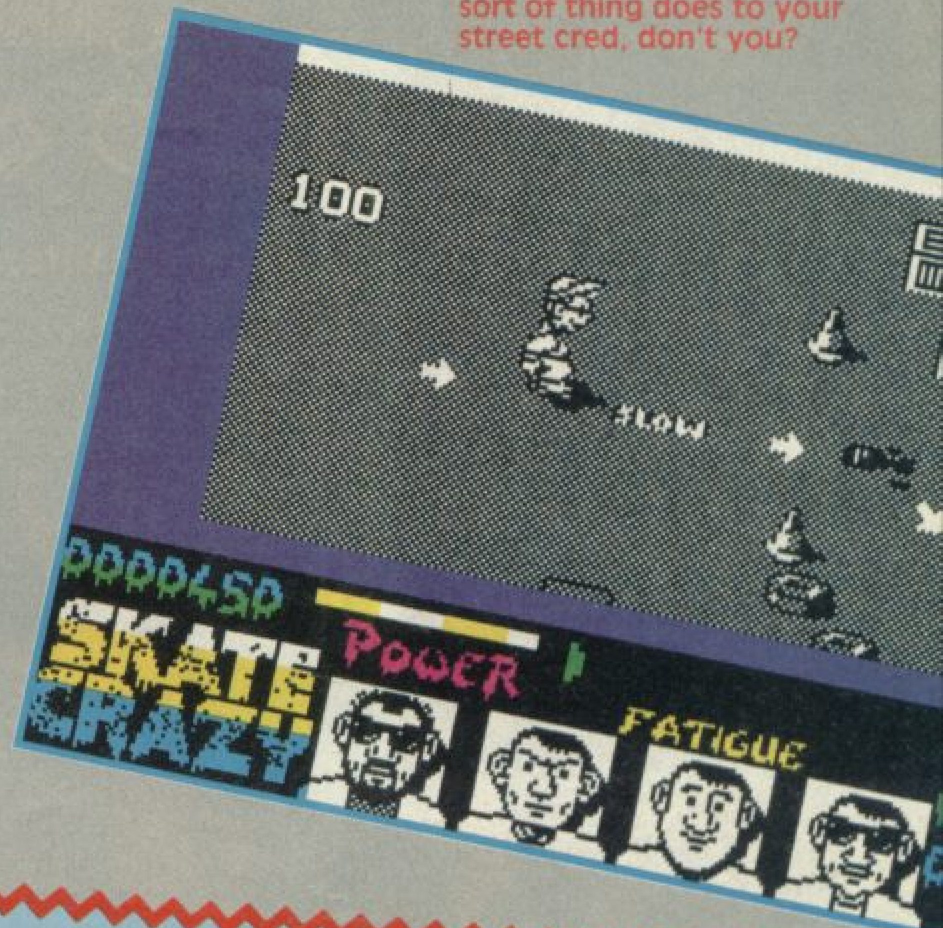
20 BRAND NEW POKES!

Last month we gave you 100, true, but these 20 pokes are all pristine fresh and bursting with newness. Machine Code hacker extraordinaire Adrian Singh has been tied up in the basements at SU HQ and has produced for your delectation:

1. MASK III – VENOM STRIKES BACK
2. KARNOV
3. ENERGY WARRIOR
4. SPORE
5. FRONTLINE
6. GEE BEE AIR RALLY
7. SUPER TROLLEY
8. SABOTAGE
9. CROSSWISE
10. XARAX
11. MERLIN
12. GOTHIK
13. FRIGHTMARE
14. MAGNETRON
15. CRAZY CARS
16. DAN DARE II
17. TIR NA NOG
18. TANKBUSTERS
19. GHOSTBUSTERS
20. BUGGY BOY

As ever the whole thing is a doddle to use, just load up the Pokes section after the game and select your Poke from the menu. Then load your game and voila! – infinite lives or whatever!





SKATE CRAZY DEMO INSTRUCTIONS

Now you've thoroughly exhausted yourself annihilating loads of aliens playing *Hyper Active*, turn you tape over and play the demo of *Skate Crazy* from Gremlin Graphics.

Freddie the roller skater must complete a marked course within a set time limit, and then he'll be awarded points based on how stylish his performance (fnar) was. All you have to do is guide yer man around the places, accumulating points and building up your street cred (much the same as a day in the SU offices). Along the way, avoid the cans, spare tyres and oil slicks. And jump a lot too.

The game can be played using Sinclair joystick. Press the fire button to build up Freddie's jump power and release to jump. The keyboard can also be used, with the following keys:

6 – LEFT
7 –RIGHT
8 –DOWN
9 –UP
0 –JUMP

P will pause the game.

Remember, get round the course as fast as possible; if you complete it while the timer is still in the red section, you'll get a bonus. If your score isn't high enough, the judges will make you go back round and pick up litter, and you know what that sort of thing does to your street cred, don't you?



STUFF IT IN A BOX!!



FOLD

FOLD

FOLD


"The Number you have dialed is not of this earth. You have opened the gateway to an alternative reality.
You are being connected to another world in another time. Where YOU are another person. Welcome to F.I.S.T."
STEVE JACKSON
presents:
F.I.S.T.
Fantasy Interactive Scenarios by Telephone
A new dimension in fantasy gaming!
DIAL
0898 800 876

WHAT IS... F.I.S.T. ?



Pick up your telephone. Dial the FIST number. And you are immediately connected to a medieval fantasy world of magic, monsters and great riches to be plundered. A world where YOU are a heroic adventurer embarking on a quest for fame and fortune... if you are skillful enough to survive.

The world of Castle Mammon – Lair of the Demon Prince – created by the fertile imagination of gamesmaster **Steve Jackson** is brought to you through the state-of-the-art computer wizardry of **Computerdial Ltd.** The creatures and deadly traps which await you in Castle Mammon are brought to life with dramatic sound effects and new gaming techniques. You can **hear** the *Roar* of the Flesh Eater as your sword bites; the *Sizzle* of the Fireball bursting towards you, the *chinking* of the many Gold Pieces you will find hidden in the Demon Prince's underground dungeon.

YOU make the decisions which direct your adventure, simply by using your telephone to dial the number which represents your choice.

Enter the **Monthly Competitions** – where the most skillful adventurers will win **REAL GOLD PIECES!** Further details in the free Adventurer's Pack

THE WORLD OF F.I.S.T.

When you dial the FIST number, you will be offered the choice of either starting the adventure immediately or choosing other options. An easy-to-follow system of menus will guide you through the options currently available. Simply listen to the instructions and dial your choice. The world of FIST will be in a constant state of development, so not all features will be available from the start. Current plans include:

FIST Rules – A guide to Hints, Strategies and Rules of the game (5 mins).

Background – To the Castle Mammon adventure (5 mins) [NB: The text of both these options are provided free in the Adventurer's Pack]

Monthly Competition – The FIST Challenge! Find the dungeon exit and register your plundered Gold Pieces at the Adventurer's Guild. REAL GOLD PIECES to be won every month!

The Black Claw Tavern – A group discussion line which will connect you with other adventurers calling at the time.

The Adventurer's Guild – Details of how to join the FIST Player's Club

The Adventurer's Academy – A fast-moving 'monster bash' designed to increase your combat skills

General Store – The village shop where you may 'buy' magical weapons, armour, potions and charms with your Gold Pieces to help you in the adventure.

COMBAT SYSTEM

You start each adventure with a pre- set level of stamina which reduces in battles when you are hit. You fight monsters by dialing in your combat strategy. Experienced FIST players will be better swordsmen than novices through the ingenious combat system which allows players to *learn* the best ways to tackle different monsters. Can *you* crack its secrets?

HINTS ON PLAY

Keep a pencil and paper by the telephone to track your choices. Keep a map! Dial 0 to repeat the previous message (useful for repeating options). Dial 9 to hear your Character Status (inventory, provisions, stamina and option to store your character on the computer for your next visit). Dial known options during text to skip out through familiar areas of the dungeon into uncharted regions (not all phones can use this facility). Send for the Adventurer's Pack (see below) *today!*

Characters in limbo

Want to *save* your character? Send him into LIMBO before you hang up. If you call again within four weeks you can retrieve him from the FIST computer and continue where you left off. No frustrating "forced restart". Limbo saves time. And money!

ADVENTURER'S PACK

Our free FIST starter pack contains all sorts of goodies, including:

- A description of the background to **Castle Mammon,** the first FIST adventure
- The game rules (as much as we'll let you know!) with hints and strategies
- A membership form for **The Adventurer's Guild,** The FIST Player's Club
- How to get yourself a **Tone Dialler** (helps speed up the adventure) if your phone is not DTMF compatible
- News of latest FIST developments

• *Just send your name and address on an A4-sized stamped, addressed, envelope to:*

F.I.S.T. c/o Computerdial Ltd, P.O. Box 530,
c/o Kensington Sorting Office,
24 Earls Court Road, London W8 6DA

F.I.S.T. ADVENTURE 1:

CASTLE MAMMON

Lair of the Demon Prince Written and Directed by STEVE JACKSON

Do you dare try your luck in this deadly PlunderQuest in Kaddis-Ra's underworld? There are great riches to be discovered (including REAL GOLD PIECES from our monthly competitions), but beware the Demon Prince's undead legions and deadly traps. In order to succeed you must enter the dungeons, gather as much treasure as you are able to discover, find the Escape Route and return to the Adventurer's Guild in Beckbridge to register your score of Gold Pieces.

Brought to you by Computerdial Ltd.

DIAL

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Calls charged at 25p per minute between 6pm-9am and weekends, and 38p per minute at all other times.

JON RIGLAR – A MAN LIVING ON THE EDGE

In this month's 'looking groovy and feeling fruity' Zapchat, we have the complete low down on Cybernoid – the latest smash from Andrew Hewson's laboratory. Not forgetting all the best in charts, the return of the High Scores and possibly even a Poke Corner hiding somewhere. Yes viewers! Once again you have 'tuned in' to the tips column with the highest readership (Gasp), the brightest spash of colour (Gawp), the most interesting tips since Micro Live (Gooerp). Yes, it's the place where things are 'happening', where things are 'going down' (man), where it's at. So, grease your nipples, tweek your tweeky bits, put on your billowing costume drapes, and hot foot it through the column with the grace of a wispfooted pixie on the red toadstool of life (??). It's bigger than a jellyfish!

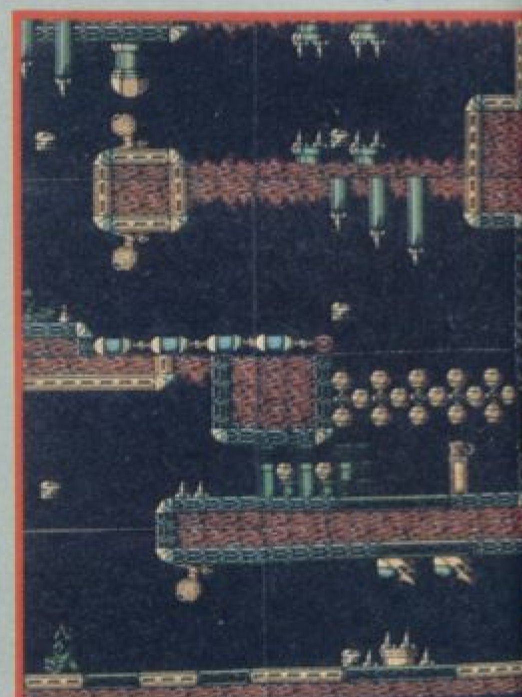
Right then you young fella me lads, I seem to remember promising a great wopping spandouly on *Cybernoid* –so here it is.

STANDBY TO ACCESS CYBERNOID . . . Hewson
Section writer: Jon 'Oh God, we're all going to die' Riglar

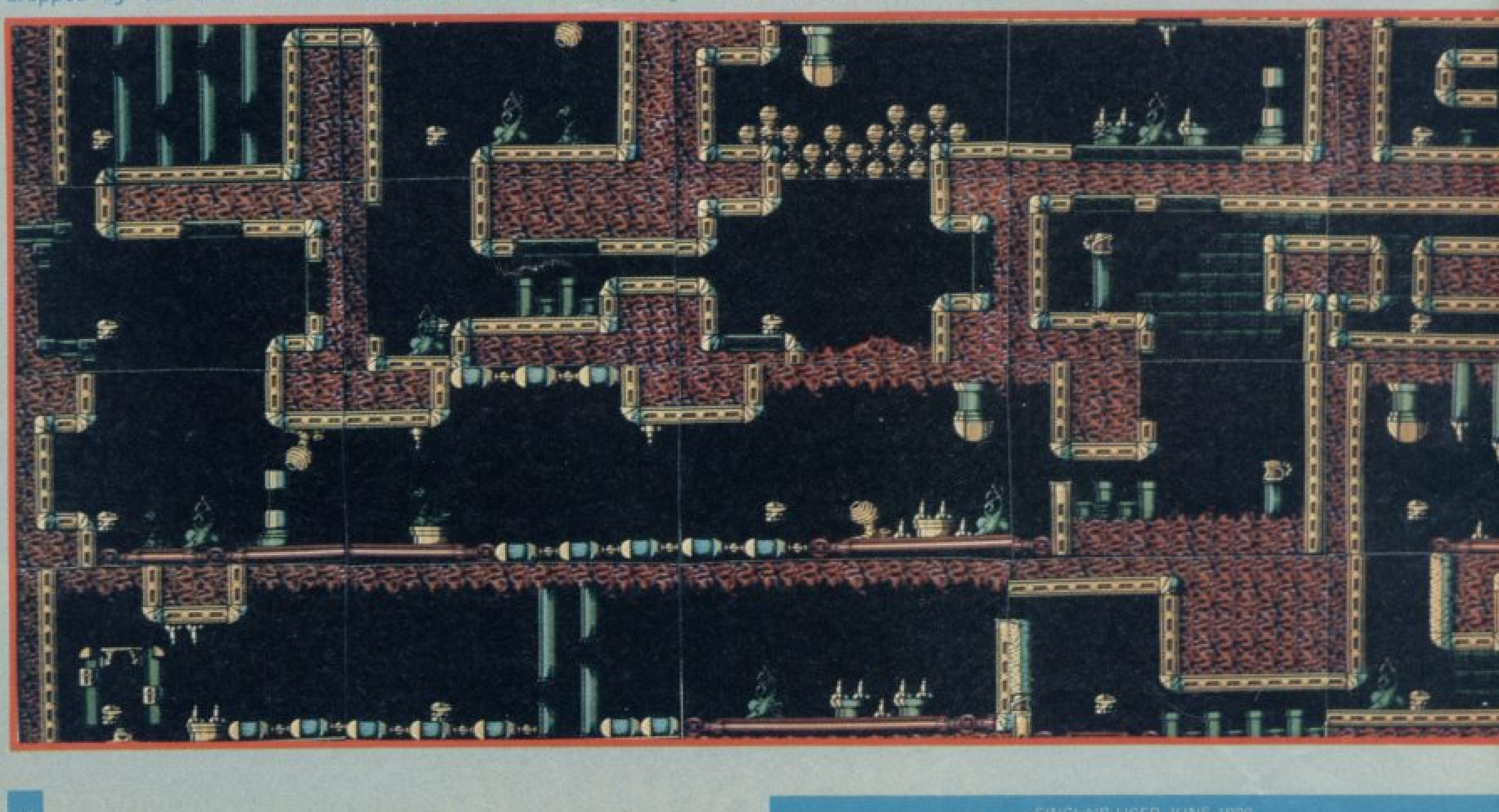
LEVEL 1

As you are all aware (unless you are now aware, ahem), *Cybernoid* involves collecting jewels and stuff within a certain time limit. These bonuses are dropped by the aliens when destroyed and with each successive level the amount required grows greater. The way to succeed is to know where to stay put and keep shooting and where to push on. (The real way to succeed is, of course, to cheat)!

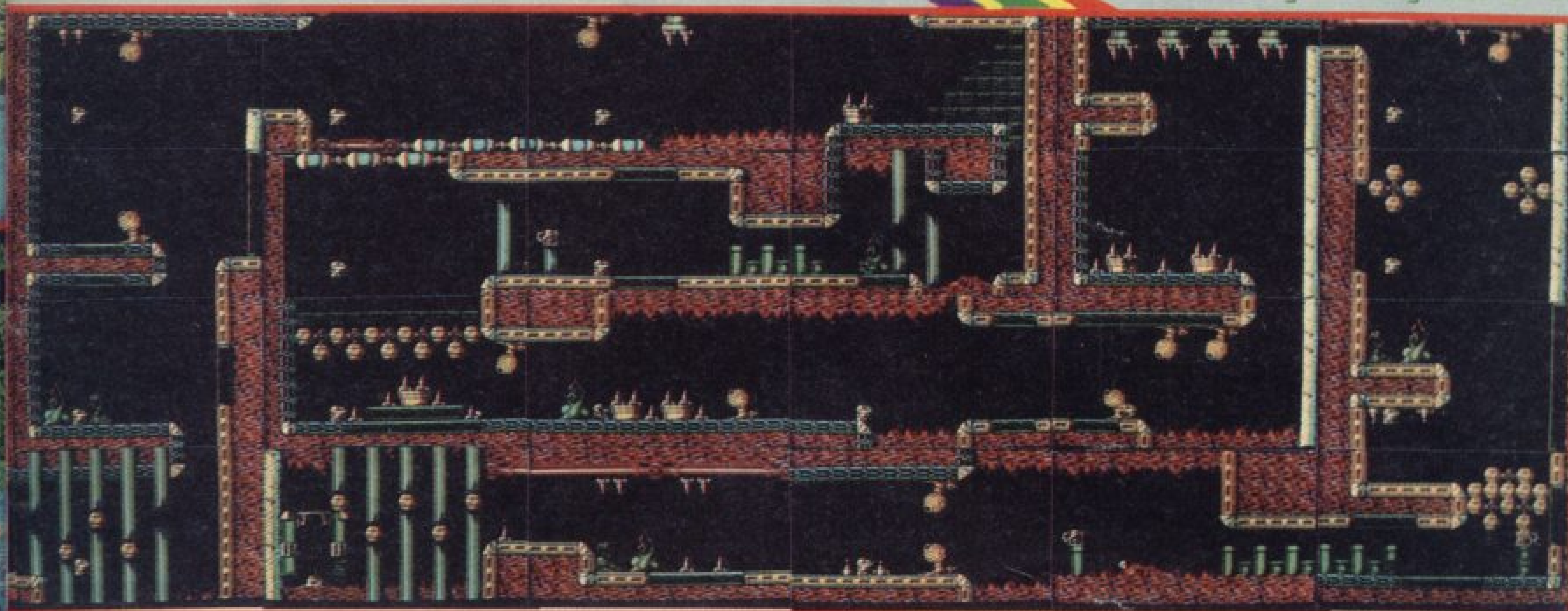
At the start of Level 1 things are easy going – in screen two collect the electronic mace. With this you can bash a few alien creatures on the head and collect some bonuses immediately. Screen three is where the mace really comes in handy – to destroy the alien at the bottom of the screen, simply crash into it with the mace. Your first tricky spot will probably occur in the following screen. You'll have to dodge in and out of the pipework to avoid the alien bullets – if this proves too costly on the old lifemeter, then use your



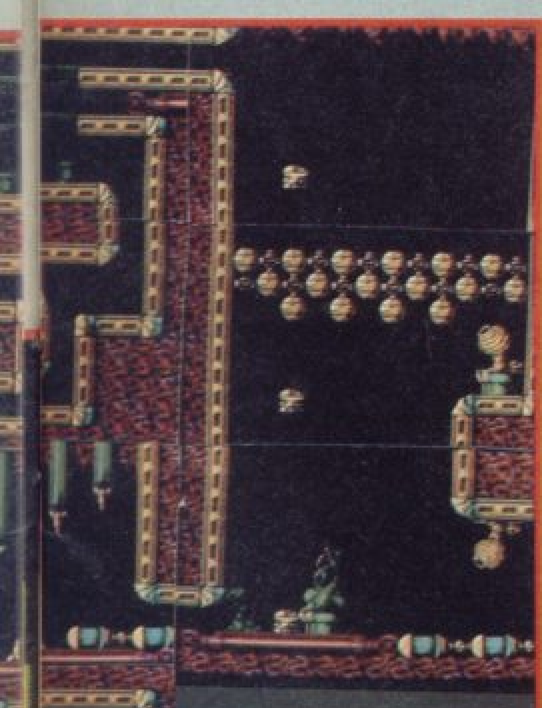
shield. Watch out for the scramble style rockets at the end. Throughout *Cybernoid*, you are going to encounter the rather nasty pipes with aliens bouncing up and down and blocking your way. Things get pretty hectic.



CHAT



The first gap you'll encounter is only small and it's easy to swoop in between the two aliens and then continually tap your joystick up. Doing this will allow you to lower your craft to the level of the exit – it should also make sure you don't crash into the alien above you. Once again, if you're a bit wimpy about these things, you can always use your shield, although it is a bit of a waste. And so you'll arrive at a screen swarming with aliens. They'll constantly swish from the left and do their best to crash into everything in the screen. A bit like my mate's car in fact. But that's a different story. This is (getting back to the game) the best screen to collect all the goodies.



'Oh bloody hell' is the perfect description for the following screen. Loadsa swarmy aliens here! Practise makes perfect – but not always. About two more screens later, you'll find yourself another nice little earner – loadsa money! (or goodies even). This is one of the ideal places to collect all the bonuses. By now time should be ticking away and so once you've gained a respectable amount of jewels, move on through the next screen – watch out for the manic caterpillar (is that the correct way to spell it)? The best method is to watch and wait until the bug exits the network of pipes and heads down along the floor. Then zoom in, and hopefully through the pipework. Don't waste a second or the bug will catch up with you.

There should be no further problem until you encounter the bug again a few screens futher on – this time it's a big heave-ho as your craft blasts its way through the blocks to reach the exit without hitting the bug. Two screen on and it's the end of this level. Destroy the clinging alien on the ceiling, plug your craft on to the final exit and then wait.

LEVEL 2

Straight into the fire (cue for a song) with you this time – the very first screen is full of little traps and the old rockets which whizz upwards when your ship passes by. There should be no problem, until you reach the caterpillar which will charge straight at your craft once you've entered the screen. Quickly move the craft into the gap in the pipework and wait until the bug passes overhead, then make a dash out of the screen.

If by any chance you manage to survive the following maze of pipes, you arrive at the next bonus round. Keep firing and collecting the stuff until you reach a decent amount. Two screens on, you'll have to dodge the craft through a set of pipes (not as difficult as the normal ones, but pretty hairy all the same). This set of pipes is easily completed if you use the shield, but it is possible to complete the screen without it.

In the next screen (which is pretty boring actually) you can collect another mace and backfiring pack – which are necessary for the following part where a huuuggge caterpillar charges around. Careful, it will crash into the craft unless you destroy the blocks to open up new pathways. It is then a process of running. In the following screen, collect a few bonuses and then march on.

No problems from here on until you arrive at a set of rockets, placed both on ground and on the ceiling – either use your shield or some bombs, but don't try to run through otherwise. Keep going past the next set of rockets (the screen is also full of aliens) and then on to a pipe maze. It's fairly simple as long as you take care not to rush it and hit the aliens collecting on t'other side. Then you're at the end of Level 2.

LEVEL 3

Pretty easy really – watch out for the rockets in the first few screens, followed by quite a few aliens hanging loose on the ceiling and ground. (How something can 'hang loose' on the floor is quite beyond me, but there you go)! A problem may arise upon arrival at the first pipework maze. It's a small one, but stones block the exits and need to be blown away as well as avoiding the alien bullets.

After avoiding the caterpillar (which is a rather nasty breed) and skipping past a few screens full of wibbly alien types (a good place to collect some stuff), you'll emerge beside a bloody massive pipework maze. You need to shoot at the stones blocking the exits; at the same time avoid crashing into the aliens.

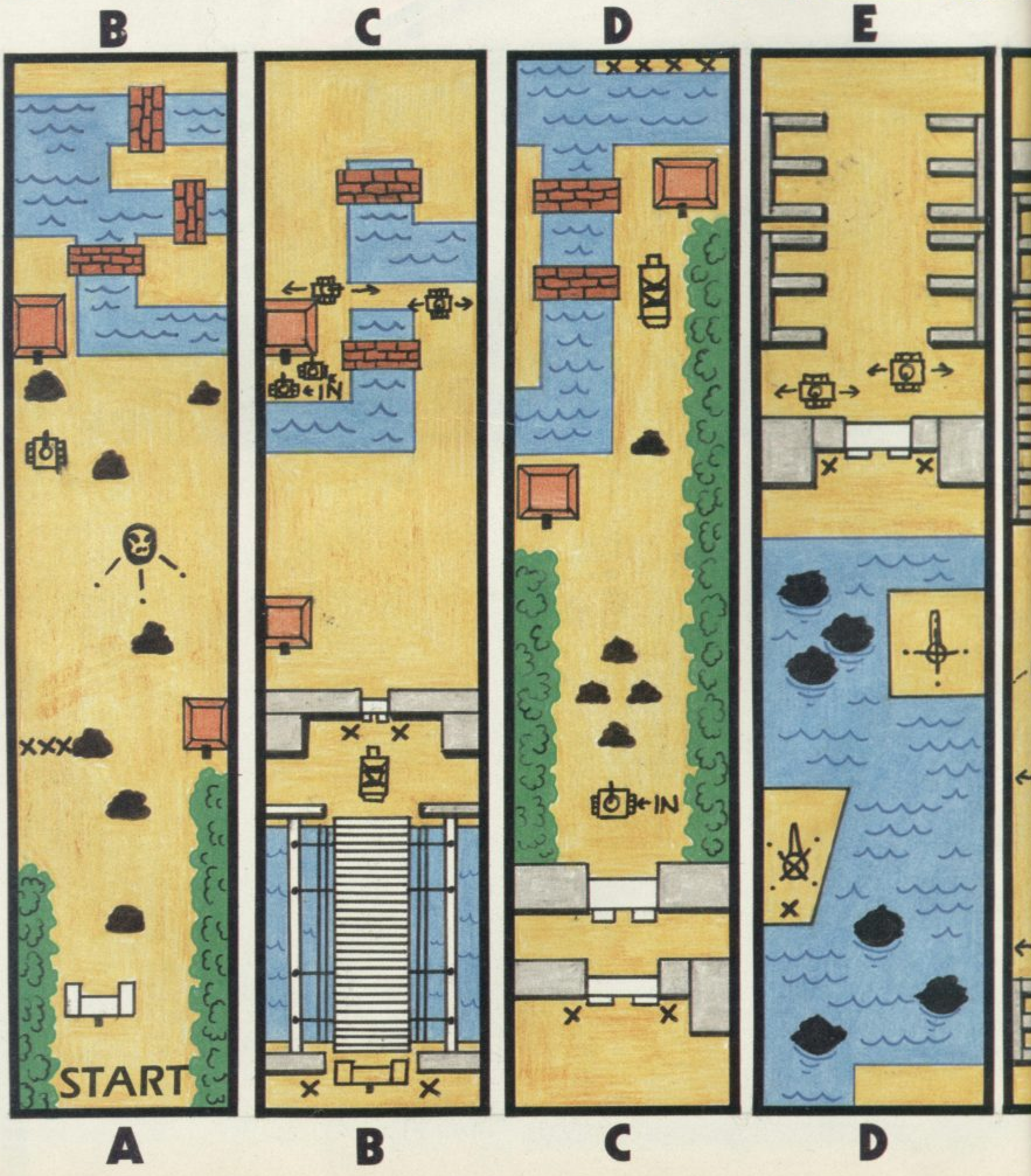
Anybody able to get this far into the game should have no problem coping with the following 4 or 5 screens until arriving at the screen full of baby caterpillars. Watch out for these and blast your way through to the exit. Dropping down and through the following pipework (which is remarkably easy) and you'll notice yet another caterpillar charging right at you. Avoid it by dripping into the gaps in the pipework.

The final screen consists of an absolutely massive pipe maze. And to make things worse, each gap is blocked with a stone. Complete this and you're on to Level 4 . .

STANDBY TO ACCESS: IKARI WARRIORS . . . Elite
Section Writer: A van Beek

Well stripe me pink and call me an aardvark, look what popped up in the post! No sooner do I, Jon 'D'you wanna see me etchings?' Riglar, mention *Ikari Warriors*, the phlooflal A. van Beek replies, "Seen it, done it, mapped it. Gi'us a tenner!" Now I'm not one to give in to bribery, even though my good buddy 'A' has got the photos of me and Jimmy 'I'm even more famous than Kirk, actually' Douglas, at the naughty nurses' party, so there's no tenner, but here's a map any way.





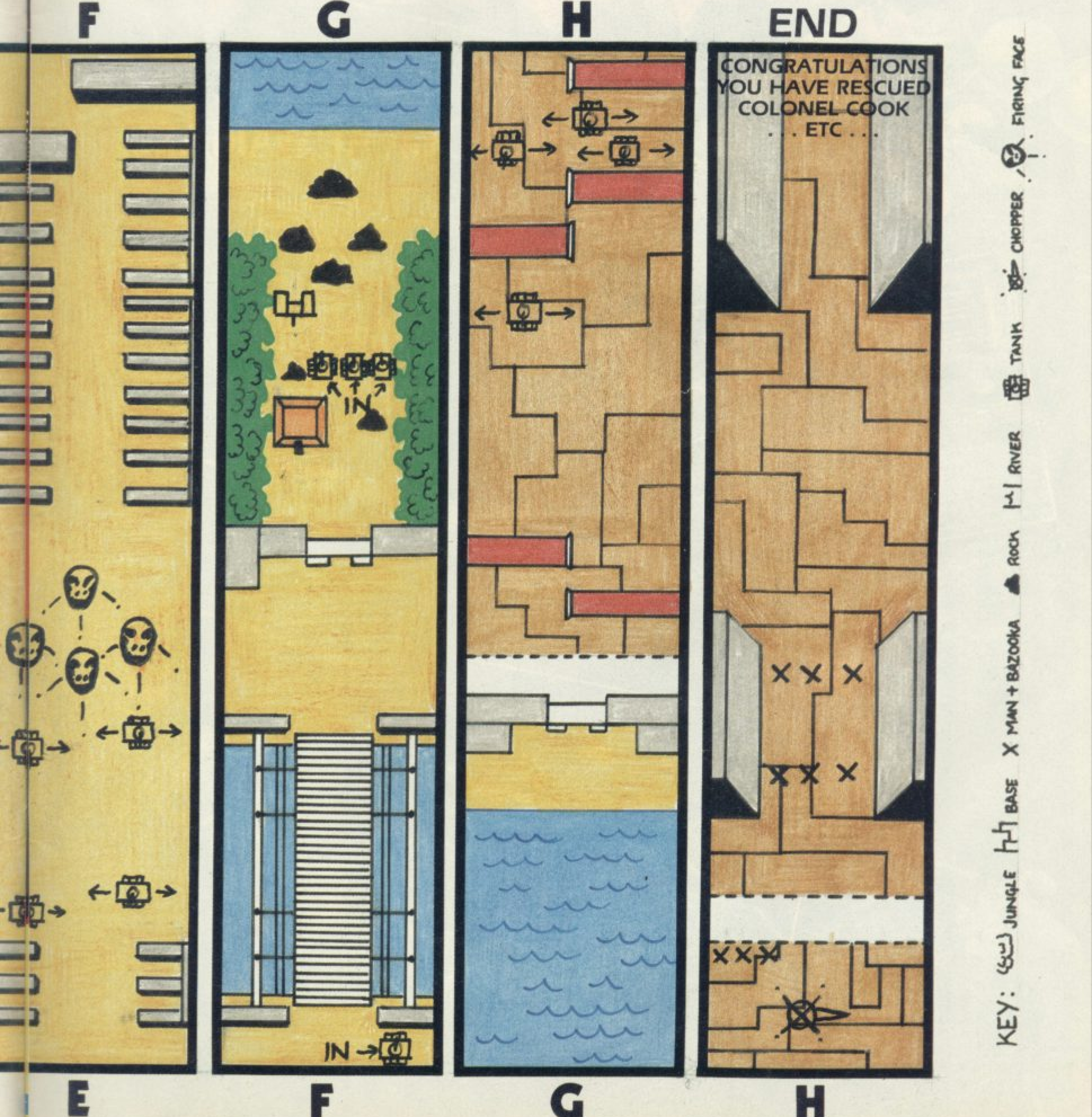


STANDBY TO ACCESS: THE POKE CORNER (AHA)
Section Writer: Jon Riglar

This month's absolutely swank Poke Corner has been compiled by Terry Maneny and Kevin Hearson. Remember that these short pokes can only be used with the range of Multifaces and the Datel Snapshot. No, it's pointless trying unless you've got one. And yes, you've to to have the game as well.

KARNOV	Poke 32855,255	Lives
SIDEARMS	Poke 29411,127	Ships
GRYZOR	Poke 35477,255	Lives
CYBERNOID	Poke 24917,255	Ships
FIREFLY	Poke 44997,255	Ships
BLACKLAMP	Poke 33606,127	Lives
	Poke 34487,127	





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Screen shots from CBM 64/128 version.




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1

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Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Buggy Boy Smash Offer, Elite Systems Ltd, Eastern Avenue, Litchfield, Staffs, along with your cheque/postal order for £6.95 made out to Elite Systems Ltd. Offer closes June 30.

"Yo! Are you cats comin' down to the beach? We're goin' in Jerry's jeep. Yeh! We can hang out down on under the boardwalk and crack some cans and chew some gum and like, relax. It'd be cool. Y'comin'? Alriiite!

"Of coss, we'll have to get there first. The road's kinda screwy. All bumps and hills and rocks an' stuff. It'll be a hairy time, but kinda cool too."

Yes, Californian people are remarkably stupid, aren't they? (Jim, this is quite unforgiveably racist. Don't do it again! – GT). Not a thought in their heads apart from having a "zany" time. Pathetic, isn't it? Still, some good things come out of their lifestyle. For example: Elite has made a ruddy good game out of one of their favourite pastimes – driving a buggy at high speed over rough terrain.

As you can tell from our review on page 27, we thought *Buggy Boy* was fab, and if you fancy the idea of taking a blast across a number of highways – all in a remarkable state of disrepair – in a fantastic buggy, this is the game for you.

Follow the usual procedure, and a copy of the game will be bouncing up your drive in days (28 in fact)■

2

STREET FIGHTER

£1·50 OFF

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STREETFIGHTER

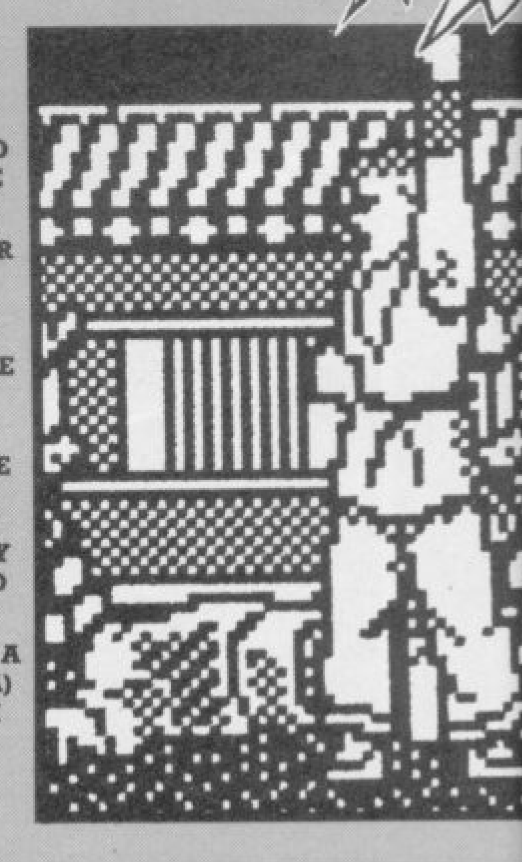
Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Streetfighter Smash Offer, US Gold, Units 2 & 3 Holford Way, Birmingham B6 7AX. Also include your cheque/postal order for £7.45 made payable to US Gold. Offer closes June 31.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA! WOT IS ALL THIS THEN? NO! YOU'RE WRONG, SO SHUT YOUR MOUF! IT'S VER FIRST EVER SMASH COUPON OFFER JOB WRITTEN BY ME – LOOOOAAAADDSAAAMUNNEEEEEEEEYYY!!! SHUT UP! NOW - THESE BLOKES DAAN AT SINCLAIR USER WANTED WELL 'ARD NUTTY BLOKE LIKE ME TO GET YOU TO SPEND YOUR WODGE ON STREETFIGHTER FROM US GOLD.

IT'S A WELL MAGIC GAME IT IS. MAGIC. YOU CAN CLOBBER ALL THESE WEEDY SAPS WHO OBVIOUSLY 'AVEN'T GOT NO MONEY AND SO VEY WEAR SHHTUPID CLOVES LIKE DENIM JACKETS!!! WAAAAAAAAANNNGGGAAAAAASS! ANYWAY, YOU'VE GOT TO GET YOURSELF ONTO VER STREET – HENCE THE NAME – AND SLAP THEIR SHTUUPIDD CHOPS!! AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

IT'S GREAT, AND IF YOU 'AVEN'T GOT LOADSAMONAY LIKE ME, YOU'LL PROBABLY BE WONDERIN' OW YOU CAN GET IT CHEAP, LIKE. TOO BLOODY RIGHT YOU ARE. THE MORE YOU SAVE ON THE GAME, THE MORE MOOOOONNNNEEEEEYYYYY YOU CAN SPEND ON OVVER STUFF LIKE CARS AN' GIRLS AND BOOZE. AAAAAAAAAAAAA!

AND VATZ WARE SINCLAIR USER COMES IN. THEY'RE SUCH A BUNCH OF 'ARD TYPES THAT THEY'VE "PERSUADED" (AAAAA) US GOLD TO REDUCE VER PRICE FROM £8.95 TO £7.45 WHICH ISN'T VERYMUCHMOOOOONNEEEEYY AT ALL.
SO GET OUT YOUR CHEQUEBOOKS AND GET WRITING!
YOU KNOW IT MAKES LOOOOAAAASSSSEEENNSSEE!



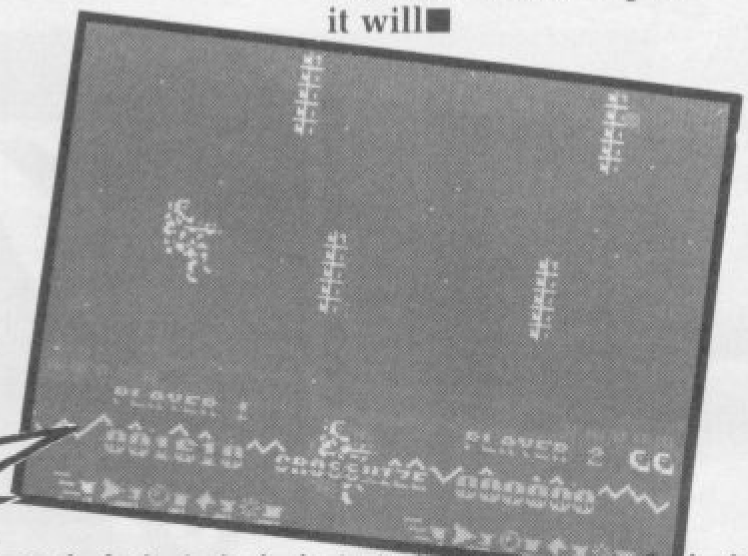
SMASH OFFER

3

CROSSWIZE

If you thought that Sidewize was the ultimate shoot-'em-up, you were pretty soft, weren't you, because Crosswize is even rougher, tougher, and, er . . . more ultimate.

Three levels of mayhem as you steer your space-suited hero through wave after wave of evil aliens, blasting away with a rather tasty selection of weapons. You got a laser, a tri-bullet, surround-fire, shields and the famous smart bomb, so imagine how much fun you can have at the expense of the slimey aliens. BUT it needn't be so expensive for you (great link, David!) because you can get a fabulous £1 off Crosswize, by special arrangement with those lovely cuddly people at Telecomsoft who you can never get on the phone. Don't forget to cut out and send in the coupon with your order, otherwise a brand botty-smacking new copy of Crosswize won't drop through your letterbox within 28 days. If you remember the coupon it will■



£1·00 OFF — SU SMASH OFFER

CROSSWIZE

Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Sidewize Smash Offer, PO Box 394, London N8, along with a cheque/postal order made payable to British Telecom PLC for £6.95. Offer closes June 30.

SMASH OFFER

4

TARGET RENEGADE

Duff! Splatt! Maim! This is what the kids want. Target Renegade **is the sequel to** Renegade,

The best bit is that there's a two-player option in which you can team up to take out the bad guys. Kick the hammer-wielding thugs, knock over the motorbike maniacs, dodge the wild dogs and try not to be kneed in the snappies by naughty ladies of the night.

With lots of different opponents, and detailed backgrounds including street scenes, a pool hall and a car park, Target Renegade **should keep you harmfully occupied for ages and ages. So you won't really want us to give you money off, will you? But we will anyway, 'cos that's the kind of people we are.**

Just cut the coupon, scribble out a cheque for £6.95, send it off to Ocean, and about 28 days later a great hairy lout will come and kick your door down, stand on your dog and stick a copy of Target Renegade **up your nose*■**

***Not actually, as Gremlin would say.**



£1·00 OFF — SU SMASH OFFER

TARGET RENEGADE

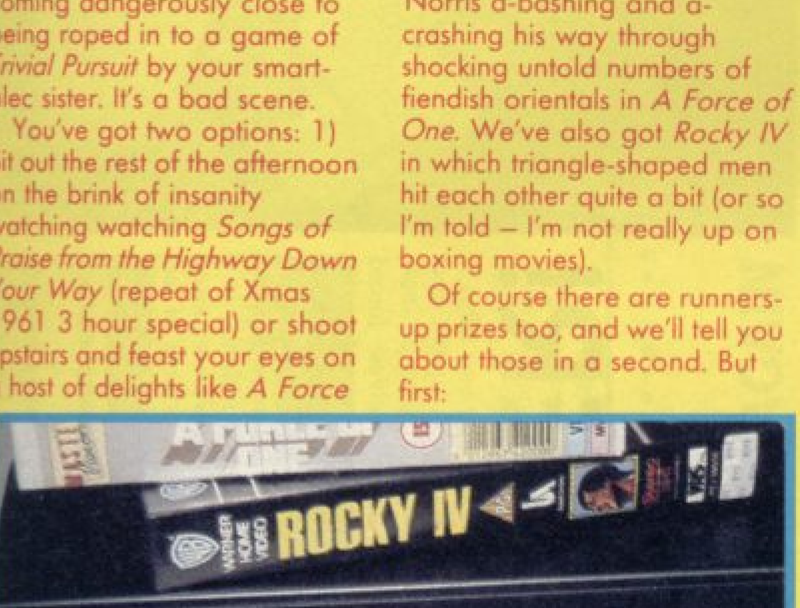
Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Target Renegade Smash Offer, Ocean Software, 6 Central Street, Manchester M2 5NS. Include your cheque/postal order for £6.95 made out to Ocean Software. Offer closes June 30.

COMPETITION

CRIKEY! WIN A VIDEO PLAYER!

Picture the scene. You're at home. It's a rainy Sunday afternoon. The Spec has been trodden on and is in the menders. You're bored out of your mind and Auntie Dolly's monopolising the TV. You're coming dangerously close to being roped in to a game of *Trivial Pursuit* by your smart-alec sister. It's a bad scene.

You've got two options: 1) Sit out the rest of the afternoon on the brink of insanity watching watching *Songs of Praise from the Highway Down Your Way* (repeat of Xmas 1961 3 hour special) or shoot upstairs and feast your eyes on a host of delights like *A Force of One* and *Rocky IV* on your video player.



What? You haven't got a video player? Well we'll soon sort that, because as luck would have it, in celebration of the fantastic **Target Renegade** (take a look at the cover and the review on pages 42 and 43) the violently lovely people at Ocean have given us a very nice indeed thankyou Saisho GP3000 video player and a couple of movies to get your video collection going.

Simply disconnect the Spec for an hour or so (I know it's tough, but do try) and hook up the player, whack in a tape and watch away. No worries about the dog's weak heart condition or your sister's stupid mates coming round and saying, "Oooh! Who's he? He's got a nice bum hehehehe titter belch etc."

And because it's all to do with **T.R.** we've included a couple of suitable films too. There's everyone's fave moustachioed hero, Chuck Norris a-bashing and a-crashing his way through shocking untold numbers of fiendish orientals in *A Force of One.* We've also got *Rocky IV* in which triangle-shaped men hit each other quite a bit (or so I'm told – I'm not really up on boxing movies).

Of course there are runners-up prizes too, and we'll tell you about those in a second. But first:

The Questions:

1) Ocean's **Renegade** (the first game) reached which position in our chart?
2) What colour (apart from the belt) is a karate outfit?
3) Name the artist of our centre-spread poster (and most of Ocean's other artwork)

The prizes (again):

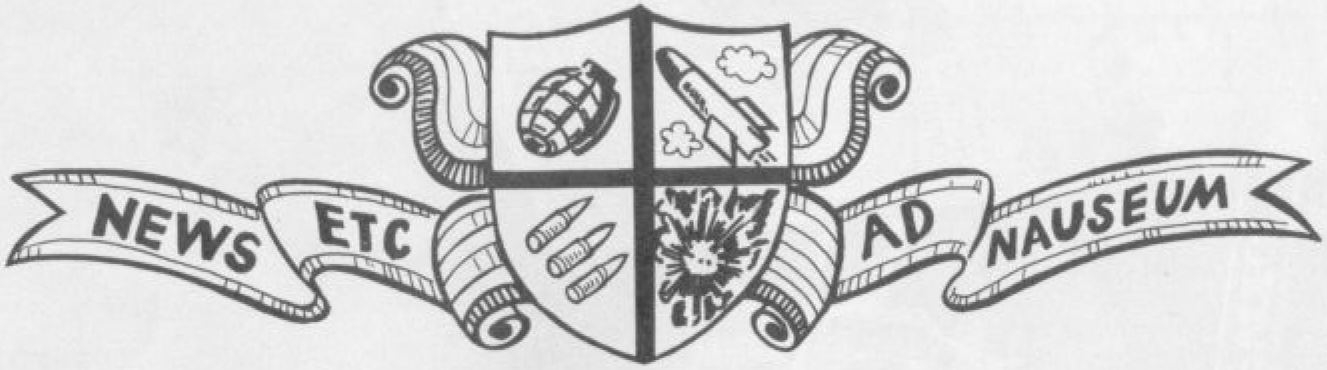
1st Prize: A Brand Spanking New Saisho GP3000 matt black (trendy trendy) Video Player. A copy of Ocean's **Target Renegade**
2nd Prizes: 20 lucky runners up will get a copy of the game.

Send your entry to: I'm a mad killing machine, so don't mess with me Compo, Sinclair User. 14 Holkham Road, Orton, Peterborough PE2 0UF. Comp closes June 30th.



NAME ....
ADDRESS ....
....
....
ANSWERS: 1 ....
2 ....
3 ....







TRUE STORIES

BUT SOME ARE SLIGHTLY MORE TRUE THAN OTHERS **PRICE: £8.70**

TOP SU HACK IN PAGE 3 SEX SHOCKER!

by our slightly smutty correspondent

SU writer Chris Jenkins spoke openly today about his steamy rendezvous with page 3 popsy Corinne Russell. It happened at the Vixen **launch, which Jenks expected would be the usual mix of free grub and sozzled journos.**

"It was far more exciting than that" said a tired and emotional Jenkins. "There was Corinne in her leopard skin bikini, bangles, high heels and a whip. Trying to concentrate on the game was hopeless as my eyes were drawn again and again to the curvy cutey. Finally our eyes met, and well, one thing led to another, and we rendezvoused behind the monitor. 'Tell me Corinne' I mumbled. 'Was it really you wrapped in a towel dancing with a giant lobster in the 'Shell Petrol Token' commercial?' 'Yeah!' she chirped. 'Great wannit!'

"After discussing Corinne's career as a Page 3 popsy, Kenny Everett dancer and lingerie catalogue model, we had nothing left to talk about but the game. What did she think of it, I asked. 'Oo-er,' she replied, 'I only saw it for the first time this morning!'

"Before I could think of a suitable reply we found ourselves forced together in a clump of obviously artificial shrubbery. Corinne's lissone body pressed against mine, my pulse raced, our chests heaved (hers more impressively than mine), and suddenly, in a blaze of flashguns, we were exposed to the leering gaze of dozens of fat, sweaty journalists, all queueing up to get their **Vixen** posters autographed. Dazed and confused, I staggered back to the office."

Let's hope we see more of Corinne's jungle japes soon – she's certainly got big things in front of her!!!!



The Kamikaze Bear Headlines

The bear don't want no big
bush baby
This bear wants a foxy lady.
Wearin' catskin, covered in oil
That girl makes this bear's
blood boil

UK troops, as this month saw the launch of Martech's ***Vixen,*** *the game with more cheesecake than Sainsbury's. The launch took place in the Intercontinental Hotel in Hyde Park, an' the bear went. Chris Jenkins went too, but only 'cos he begged on bended knee. So Kami got to meet* ***Corinne***

MASTER PETE

SU'S 'GRIM' IN SAUCY SKY STUNT SESSION



By Chuck Saway

For a long time now, members of the SU team have been bombarded by cries of, "I wish I could fly . . ." And no, the Orville licence hasn't gone to Vomitsoft, it's all down to our esteemed Editor.

Yes, Sir Graham Taylor has long wanted to be an aircraft pilot, and despite the fact that his contact lenses keep going all wonky, this month Activision game him the chance to do just that.

To celebrate the launch of **Gee Bee Air Rally** (which even Tony Dillon thought was pretty good), Activision took a load of journalists off to an airfield and gave them the opportunity to fly a plane. Here we see Taylor about to enter the aircraft. Note the cheesy, 'pop-star' grin. And he may well grin, because after flying the plane up, down left a bit and right a bit, Taylor was named the best new pilot by the coach. Probably because he was the only one not to wretch all over the inside of the aeroplane.

IN 'FRESH' CHARITY PROG TIE-IN SHOCK

By Noel Norris

Here we have the first glimpse of the packaging for The Race Against Time **from CodeMasters, the charity game written for Sport Aid. Why just the packaging, why not a couple of screen shots and a load of blurb on the Preview spread? Because the game isn't officially launched until 7th May when it will appear on** Get Fresh, **the Saturday morning kids' show.**

As you know, all the money raised from the game goes to the Sport Aid charity, and CodeMasters reckon that it'll be fabby. And it's got a very old Peter Gabriel record included too, so if you're into nostalgia, go for it.



Russell and all her leopard-skin. And what was it like? Read Jenkins' report on this page for the full low down, but let the bear tell you now, when it comes to unarmed combat, that girlie's about as frightening as being savaged by a dead sheep.

Loads of ya have claimed to have won the **Dan Dare** *competition from last month's issue, and you've bin driving us (and the poor receptionist) mad over the last month, ringin' up at 7.30 in the mornin' an' stuff like that (Grrr). Well the Comp was won on the 15th of April, cos' he was a* **smart arse.**

Kami's bin asked by the President to talk about hijackin'. Just in case there are a few of youse out there thinkin' of gettin' on the school bus an' yellin', "take me to **Libya!"** *take a tip from me . . . It won't work. You'll get to Libya probably, but once the bear finds out, he'll mash yer face in fur ya. Crime (an' hijackin') don't pay, an' Kami don't want none of youse guys to even think about tryin' it. I had enough trouble sortin' out them Koowaities last month. Jeez, the trouble those guys caused even me. Grrrrr.*

Finally dis month, a word for the man behind the beard, **I'm talkin' to you, Alan Sugar.** *You know who you are. There's been one or two rumours goin' round about a + 4 machine. Is there a machine, or what? Stop all the cloak an' dagger stuff an' tell the truth! Is there a 'puter, or isn't there a 'puter? Tell the bear, an' the kids, or there'll be trouble. Grrrrr.*

BRUSH UP YOUR PIXIE

By a short correspondent

Fantasy gamers are cleaning their paintbrushes ready for the Golden Demon Awards, the miniature decorating competition organised by Games Workshop.

Over 60 shops selling **Citadel** and **Iron Claw** miniatures are taking part in the contest, which has 9 categories including Single Figures, Groups, Scratch-built spaceships and presumably Mixed Pairs on skates. Several thousand entries are expected for the competition, which will be judged in July. The winners from each shop will receive **Games Workshop** T-shirts and goodies, while the overall winners at the final in Nottingham will get thousands of pounds worth of prizes, including the Golden Demon sword. Whatever that is. For details of your nearest participating dealer, contact Games Workshop on 0773 769731 or ask your local pixie.

THAT +4 RUMOUR AGAIN

It won't go away. Here's the latest on the MegaSpectrum rumours:

- **It has a Z80H processor** (faster version on the usual Speccy one)
- **It has 320 x 200 pixel graphics (i.e. no colour clash)**
- **It has Amiga-like sound sampling facilities**
- **It's due late summer**
- **We're starting to believe it . . .**

MYSTERY ROBOT REVEALED

By an unknown correspondent

Admirers of big smily yellow robot in in last month's Outlands will no doubt be clamouring to find out where they can buy the blessed thing.

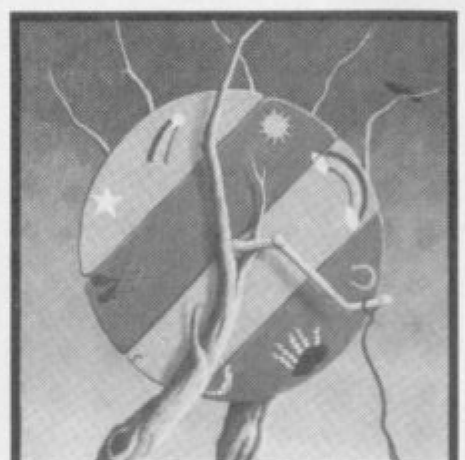
He's better known as 'Imperial Dreadnought', and is part of the Warhmmer series. Anybody wanting to get their very own 'bot to admire had best get in touch with: Citadel Miniatures, Games Workshop Mail Order, Chenton Street, Hilltop, Eastwood, or your local Games Workshop store.

TASTY TITILATING TAROT CARDS

From our Clairvoyant Correspondent

Over the coming months, we at True Stories **will endeavour to introduce you to a line-up of some of the gorgeous promotional items which come whizzing through our letter box.**

This month's pouting promo is the Tarot Card from those whacky boys at Domark. Can you guess what this Wheel of Fortune card is promoting? Neither could we! But apparently the Wheel of fortune has something to do with **Live and Let Die,** the new James Bond game from the Dom Dom Brothers. Another luscious lovely but faintly absurd thingy next month. We hope.







ARCADE ★ REVIEW

BUGGY BOY



Pedal to the metal, it's race time again as the latest road burning game hits the shops. **Buggy Boy** contains some prodigious feats of programming, though as you'll see, you may not find it more enjoyable than existing titles such as **Outrun** or **Crazy Cars**.

As usual, your car appears in the lower centre of the screen, and the course swerves from left to right around you. In this game, though, hitting obstacles such as logs causes you to leap into the air. This can be handy if it helps you to avoid more solid objects such as boulders, but it can also cause you a bit of a headache on landing – in fact, you can end up as a (beautifully animated) fireball.

There are five courses to race, the first an off-road trail and the others progressively harder racetracks. All are littered with obstacles including trees, boulders, logs, flags and gates, tunnels, bridges and fences. Steering is straightforward, but if you're in a tight corner you can press the fire button as you turn to execute a particularly sharp curve. By pulling the stick up and down you can also change gear; since there are only two gears, this doesn't add all that much to the game.

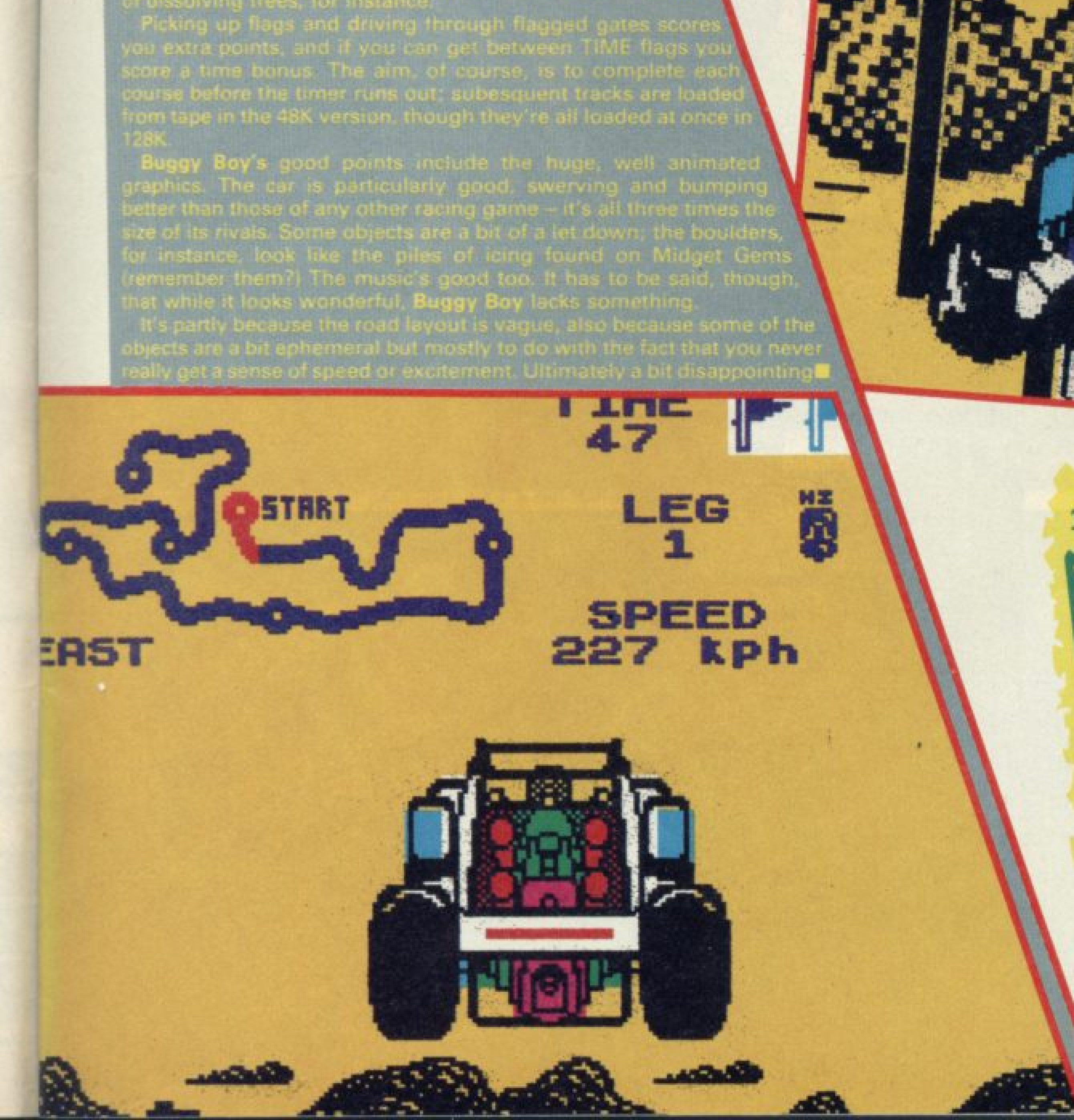
To squeeze between obstacles you can tilt your Baja Buggy on to two wheels by running over a small rock. More bizarrely, though, some of the obstacles just seem to disappear if you drive straight at them – there are a couple of dissolving trees, for instance.

Picking up flags and driving through flagged gates scores you extra points, and if you can get between TIME flags you score a time bonus. The aim, of course, is to complete each course before the timer runs out; subesquent tracks are loaded from tape in the 48K version, though they're all loaded at once in 128K.

Buggy Boy's good points include the huge, well animated graphics. The car is particularly good, swerving and bumping better than those of any other racing game – it's all three times the size of its rivals. Some objects are a bit of a let down; the boulders, for instance, look like the piles of icing found on Midget Gems (remember them?) The music's good too. It has to be said, though, that while it looks wonderful, **Buggy Boy** lacks something.

It's partly because the road layout is vague, also because some of the objects are a bit ephemeral but mostly to do with the fact that you never really get a sense of speed or excitement. Ultimately a bit disappointing■





FAXBOX

Graphically excellent roadrace, slightly let down by gameplay which lacks excitement

BUGGY BOY
Label: Elite
Author: In-house
Price: £9.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆ 8

GRANDSLAM

PRESENTS

THE FLINTSTONES

Bowl or Bust! Fred and Barney want to go bowling but Wilma has other ideas . . . . . . and guess who's left holding the baby? Join The Flintstones in this officially licensed arcade adventure based on the famous Hanna Barbera cartoon characters.









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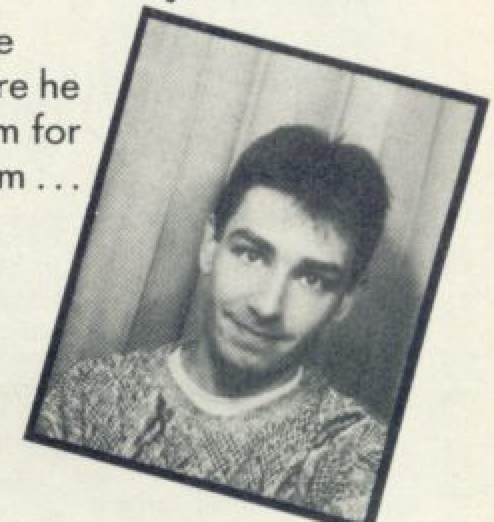
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GRANDSLAM

CODE TALK

David Shea is the man behind Elite's **Ikari Warriors,** the game everyone thought would never come out. We pinned him down at Kent University, where he exclusively revealed that it wasn't his fault. While we were at it, we asked him for his thoughts on the meaning of life, but mostly how much he hates Birmingham . . .



IT WASN'T HIS FAULT!

I wrote the Amstrad version of **Ikari Warriors,** then I went to Kent University where I'm studying computer systems. Someone else was supposed to be doing the Spectrum version, but when he finished it, it was no good, so I went back to Elite and did the Spectrum version in a month. Then the release was held up until the Commodore version was ready.

HE'S DEAD LAZY!

I like taking things easy, and I don't like work at all. The only ways I can force myself to work are when there are other people depending on me and I don't want to let them down, or when I'm offered vast amounts of money.

HE HATES BIRMINGHAM!

I hate Birmingham. It's got no character, and I have horrible memories of staying in a grotty bed and breakfast place there while I was working for Elite. I like Liverpool though – I've got family there.

HE'S A BITTER MAN!

I can't stand lager of any type. I'm a bitter man – my favourite's Canterbury Ale.

IT'S SPRING ONION CRISPS EVERY TIME!

I like spring onion flavour crisps. Or prawn cocktail, they're not bad.

HE'S A BIT OF AN OLD HIPPY!

I don't play a musical instrument, but I like music, particularly Gerry Rafferty, Genesis, and Queen.



OK. So who says all programmers are a bunch of weirdos?

HE LIKES SHOOT-'EM-UPS!

I like simple games where you don't have to solve puzzles or anything like that. I'm playing **Carrier Command** at the moment. I hate anything with thousands of rooms, I like things like **Zynaps.**

HE DRIVES A SPIFFING CAR!

I'm thinking of taking a driving holiday in America, touring the West coast. But I've only just got a car – it's a BMW Series 7.

HE'S A SPORTY CHAP!

I'm chairman of the university volleyball club, and we arrange lots of trips and social functions, so that's the centre of my social life.

HE'S NOT A TABLOIDS SORT OF PERSON!

Who's my favourite Page 3 girl? Er, I don't know really – I don't get the Sun.

HE LIKES WILL HAY!

Favourite films? I quite liked *Stakeout* – apart from that, Will Hay (ancient British comic famous for playing daft headmasters).

HE DOESN'T LIKE BEING A GOOSEBERRY

My idea of a horrible night out would be playing gooseberry with my flatmate and his girlfriend.

HE'LL PROBABLY BE WRITING GAMES UNTIL HE'S 90!

I suppose I'll carry on writing games for years. Apart from that I'd like to work in special effects for films, but I don't suppose that I ever will . . .

HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY PROFOUND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE MEANING OF LIFE!

Not at this time of day, no.

SOFTOGRAPHY

Frenzy (Quicksilva, 1983), **The Snowman** (Quicksilva, 1984), **Hijack** (Electric Dreams, 1986), **Ikari Warriors** (Elite, 1988)

FIRING SQUAD



I've found you out! I have noted your sudden appearance to SU and have been making the appropriate enquiries. My nose first started twitching when I realised that both you and Tamara Howard appeared at roughly the same time. My (undisclosed) informants have told me that you once belonged to the aforementioned Tamara Howard when she was a child. I have managed to acquire a home movie footage of Tamara at the age of two masticating upon your left ear. Other scenes including holding your right ear in her mouth and shaking you as would a terrier with a rabbit! This sadistic (and, for you, embarrassing) behaviour has been reflected in her reviews, although admittedly she's quietened down a bit. All this mistreatment of your aural receptors must have done severe damage to you. My (still undisclosed) sources say that there are large tears on the underside of your ears, and it is only your misdirected pride which has prevented you from seeing a seamstress!

In regard to the home movie film: to protect your pride, I am prepared to do a deal. I shall release the film in lengths inversely proportional to the amount of money you send me.

Peregrine Falcon
Berks

● ***Ain't no bird gonna frighten me! You ain't got no proof it was me! An' the blonde says she ain't never made a movie in her life!***

I have some complaints to make about your mag and Megatape 2. first, in April I was reading the Zapchat about **Garfield** but I got to fat tip 9 and read "A bird should now appear" what a load of rot.

And now complaint 2; on the program *Go Bear Go*, I know how to crash the game. When it's loaded, just press Break.

Crain Train
Somerset

● ***So don't press Break, dummy and anyway it's a sinch to restart the game . . .***

At last, the best news I've heard all week, month, year! "What is it," I hear you cry?

I'll tell you. In April's edition of the mega cool SU, I was reading the Charts, and . . . hang on, wait a minute, **Renegade** has got ten stars and a Classic! Could this be true? Did Graham Taylor come to his senses? Or did you have to beat the sense into him? Anyway, to celebrate this you can all come round to my place for a celebration all-night party.

N Hanning
Middlesex

● ***Sorry to disappoint you 'N', but it was a mistake an we put it right last time. But we'll be round your place in half an hour. C'mon Troops!***

Could you please increase the number of swear words in your mag. It gives so much more effect to the mag. I mean, instead of 'effective' you could have 'bloody effective'. I am begging you to use more swear words. It's bloody important that you do this!

Anon.

● ***What! With Taylor censoring every ***** word we ***** print? No chance. 'Specially as you don't say who you are, yellowbelly.***

Somebody help meeee! Hello there, do you know what I've gone and done I've lost the Poke Book and do you know what was in it? The poke for **Thundercats** and I need it?

I would be very pleased if you lovely, nice people at SU could print it for me on the Letters page. Cheers, The Bear. I mean, Mr Bear.

Change the subject. One day I was playing **Game Over**, and when I got to the seventh screen I tried to shoot the cannon. I died instead, but surprisingly enough I got 238 extra lives. Strange, but it certainly helped me to complete Part One.

Andrew Muir
Cambridge

● ***No. We won't take up space with that but we'll send you a noo book instead. As for Game Over – you know what you done? You found a bug.***

I am here to lighten the hearts of all the arcade players who buy arcade-adventures. I bought **Garfield** an could get nowhere with it. But I persisted and thanks to this persistence, I managed to finish the entire game. What a sense of fulfilment and achievement, I was so happy.

I think people should just keep trying.

And now a word about the mag. It is excellent, it is totally cool. I enter all the competitions,and the Gremlin caption competitions are great. All of Gremlin is sponditious and ZapChat in colour is cool. Outlands is suitably Outlandish, and is definitely one of the best bits in the mag. In all, this makes up to the best magazine around.

David

● ***Apart from the fact you don't have no surname and you don't come from nowhere you're my kinda guy.***

In the March edition of SU, I noticed a number of letters with complaints as to the sound quality of the Sinclair + 3.

I have had my +3 model since Christmas and have, "touch wood", experienced no problems as to sound distortion with any of the many games I have used.

Furthermore I have not experienced any problems with loading or saving from both disc and tape.

Summing up, I am very pleased with my +3 and would recommend one to anyone.

Martin Perry
West Midlands

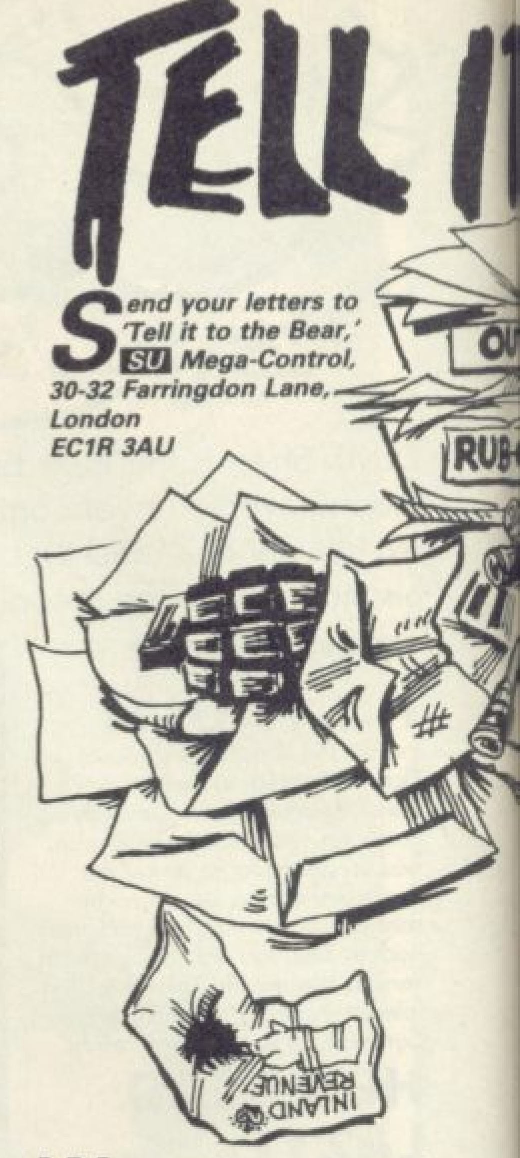
● ***Anyone else got anythin' to say? I must say our office +3 sounds like it's underwater.***

I luuurve the Mega tapes. They are the best thing since musical Christmas cards! All the pokes, demos and games make them well worth the money. Please, please, please carry on making the Mega Tapes for as long as SU lives.

Neil Mercer
Wilts

● ***OK kid.***

TELL IT



Send your letters to 'Tell it to the Bear,' SU Mega-Control, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU

We are writing to tell you of a mistake found in your April issue. It is on page 21 and in the article beginning, and I quote, "In the beginning was the Spectrum. Lots of people bought one. Lots of other people wrote games for the Spectrum and lots of people

Pssst, want some money? Us old incorruptibles at SU have got a crisp ten pound Um . . . cheque just waiting for you as reward for your contribution to a brand new feature called:

PRAISE SU TO THE SKIES!!

All you have to do is write us the most over the top, excessive, fulsome, extravagant, extreme letter of praise we've ever seen. The most truly superlative each month will win ten pounds! Here's the sort of thing we mean:

May the sun shine out of your collective rear ends forever! To read your magazine endows me with such a sense of privilege, inspiring me to higher and greater heights than my degraded existence would otherwise allow.

I find the staff highly intelligent, charming and stunning in appearance, what pearls of wisdom they write, oh if only I could meet even the lowliest cleaner at SU, my life would indeed by decliciously complete.

And all for a mere £1.50 as well. Why do the proletarian morons complain? What are material possessions when compared to the fulfilment and purpose that SU gives one?

Kamikaze! What a fun loving bundle of fluff he is! I grovel in a revoltingly base manner to the genius who inspired this gleeful little pumpkin. Yours sincerely and devotedly, a humble and loyal servant,

Peter Hoare
Bristol

● ***Kami says: "Give that bloke ten quid."***

Send your letter to:
"You really are totaly fab and I'm not just saying that for the money" SU Mega Control, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.
Don't forget to include your name and address.



TO THE BEAR!



You got a comment? You got something to say? You got an opinion about what's good and bad. Wanna praise the mag? Wanna heap some indignation and kick a few butts? Don't keep it to yourself, just put your thoughts down on paper and TELL IT TO THE BEAR!

Kamikaze don't mess around. I'll print anything that got something to say with a name and address on it (No address no printy yellowbelly) you jus tell me all about it and send your message to 'Tell it to the Bear', SU Central, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU

bought those as well." End of paragraph.

In this, the second paragraph, the mistake was spotted.

"But there was a snag – everything used cassette tapes, which were fine for Depeche Mode, but not for so hot for computer software."

The underlined word should not be there because it doesn't fit in, and makes the whole statement sound stupid.

The extract should read, "But not so hot for computer software." Notice we have missed out the 'underlined for'. I hope to see some comment in your magazine.

Robin Manock and Russell Roberts
Bolton

● ***Kami's grateful for your help. But youse should know you made one or two mistakes yourself. First off, you keep switching between first person singular and plural, changin' from, "I", to "we", every now and then. Second, why the inverted commas around, " 'underlined for.' "? Should be just, "for", and they should be quotation marks (eg "for") because it's a quote, isn't it? So we all make mistakes don't we? SO SHOVE OFF!!***

I am writing to you on my YUPPY Basildon Bond writing pad with one of the three BIC biros that I got from GATEWAY for 18p (interesting, uh)?

On the 16th February I was stapling my man eating hamster to the cat's tail when my Mum came in with the March issue of SU. On the cover was. . .

Michael Egerton
Ledbury
Hereford and Worcester

● ***That's enough of that you borin' loony. We know what was on the cover nit wit.***



I have a bone to pick with you. Firstly, the last time I wrote to you, the idiotic bear, you spelt my surname PALLOUT when it should be PALLANT! Secondly, I think that SOLID GOLD should have got a Classic instead of just 8 stars.

Simon Pallant
Cheshire

PS who does that Kamikaze fella think he is! Gordon the Gopher could kill him with a pair of broken arms.

● ***Kami apologises wholeheartedly, Pallett. Get that gopher round here an' I'll mash him – no messin'.***

I would just like to say that I have got on to and finished the Grand Finale of **Super Stunt Man**. To be totally honest, and thoroughly modest, I think that I am very skilled. (Well at least better than Chris Jenkins).

Christopher Dickson
Glasgow

● ***Well Kami thinks ya should go away an' practise your unarmed combat, 'cos I'm a-coming round to smash yer face in, in half an hour. And by the way a small bunny rabbit would be more skilled than Chris Jenkins.***

All round, your mag is the best on the market, but your marks system means nothing.

You really should revamp your marks system. You know what I mean, different marks for graphics, sound, playability, addictive qualities, presentation, etc. It wouldn't 'alf boost your reviews and give a more general overall impression.

Paul Jones
Lancs

PS Why does Tony Dillon keep going on about eating his granny?

● ***Not a bad idea, Paul I'll have words with the people with the typewriters and see what they say. As for Dillon . . . heck I've had my suspicions about the little runt for ages.***



You lie Khazi! You deserted me. We were together and you left me north of Saigon to save your own skin. I was surrounded Khazi. Real scared, an' it takes a lot to scare me. I really thought I was gonna die Khazi, but I lived.

I forgave you, and didn't spill the beans. But you call me a double agent, an informer and a yellowbelly and I don't like that. I demand an apology Khazi, an' I want you to tell the readers the truth. Tell 'em what really happened.

Or I'll do you.

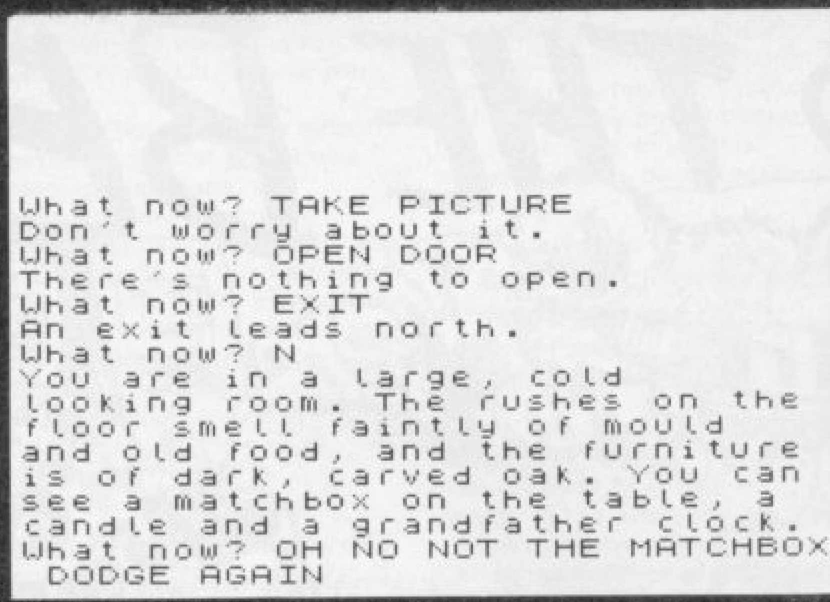
Tiddles the Cat
Lancs

● ***Tiddo! Yo! How's it hanging? Sorry about the mix up in 'Nam. but I knew a tough guy like you could look after himself come hell or high water. And what's losing a couple of limbs between friends. Hell, you can walk on your front paws, can't you? Quit moanin', or I'll tell everybody about those two kittens in Cambodia . . . have a medal for old time's sake but quit whinging.***

TIME AND MAGIC

Ttime and Magic contains three of level 9's finest adventures; Lords of Time, Red Moon and The Price of Magik. Having played these the first time around, I was curious to see what improvements, if any, had been made.

According to the accompany blurb each game, "has been enhanced and enlarged with more text than ever before – 60,000 mind-expanding words creating magik and mystery around every corner." Their modesty obviously knows no bounds.



For your money you get a pretty blue box, three cassettes (one side of each is for 48K Spectrums and the reverse side is for 128K), a novella which gives you full loading instructions, some hints on each game and a story to set the scene.

No piccies in these adventures, but if you saw the original graphics then you will realise that the extra text more than makes up for the lack of artwork!

In Lords of Time you get to travel through the ages inside a grandfather clock. You quest is to search through time to collect nine essential artefacts which, when combined, will protect Time and Magik and avert the evil being planned by the Timelords.

Red Moon gives you the opportunity to bash a few beings and cast a few spells in your attempt to rescue the power crystal.

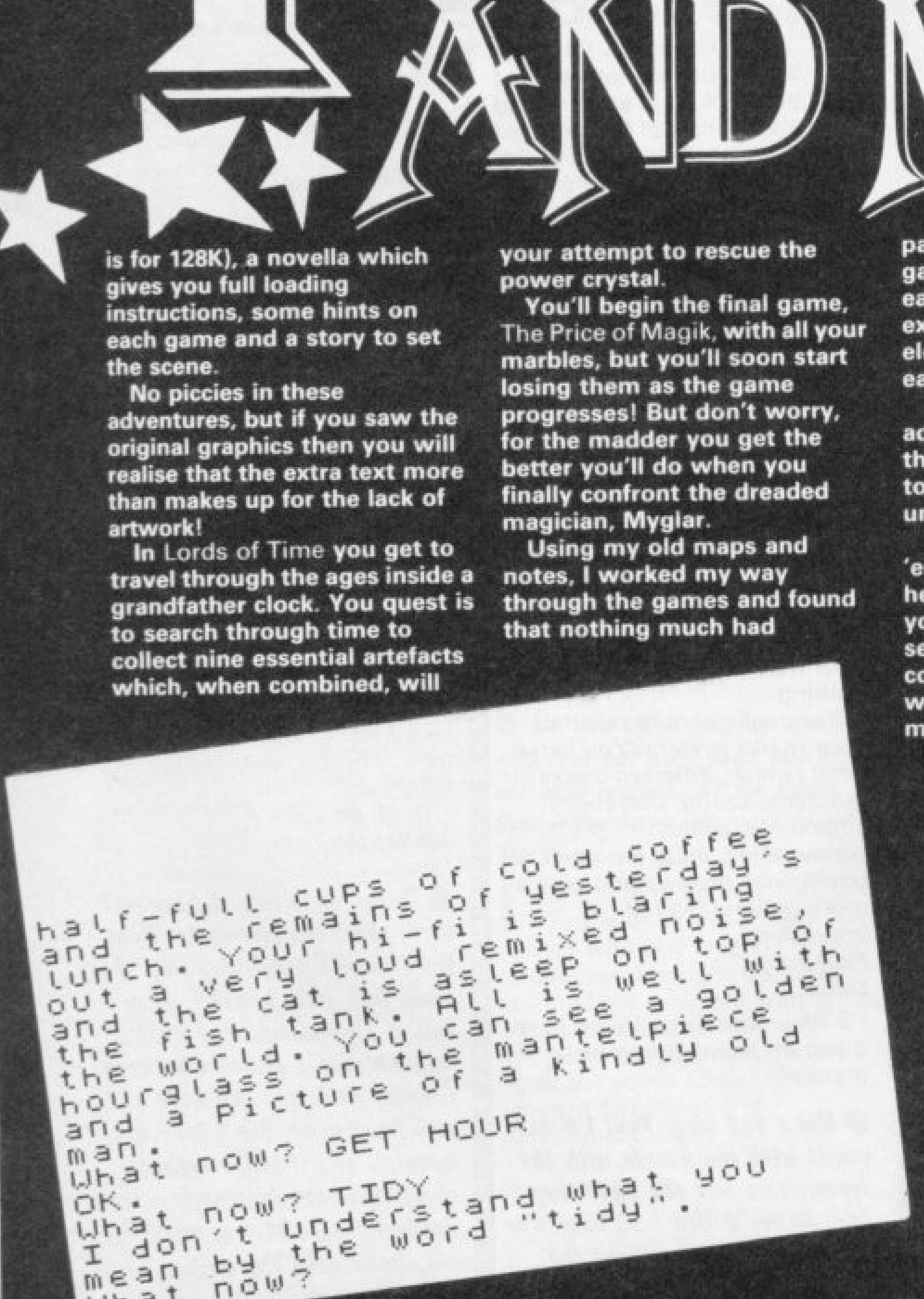
You'll begin the final game, The Price of Magik, with all your marbles, but you'll soon start losing them as the game progresses! But don't worry, for the madder you get the better you'll do when you finally confront the dreaded magician, Myglar.

Using my old maps and notes, I worked my way through the games and found that nothing much had changed. The text was indeed enhanced but the puzzles and problems were virtually the same as in the original versions.

Be prepared to use up lots of paper when you map these games as the playing area in each is huge. If you enjoy exploring, then you'll be in your element wandering around each of the games.

If you've played all these adventures before then I don't think there are enough changes to warrant buying them again – unless you're into nostalgia!

However, if you haven't seen 'em before, then I wouldn't hesitate recommending that you get your money out. No self-respecting adventurer's collection would be complete without these great masterpieces■



FAXBOX

Excellent compilation from those grand masters of adventure writing, Level 9.

TIME AND MAGIK
Label: Mandarin Software
Author: Level 9
Price: £14.95
Joystick: none
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Sandra Sharkey

★★★★☆ 8



FROM THE MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS TEAM.
CREATORS OF THE AWARD WINNING DRILLER
DARK SIDE
FEATURING
FREESCAPE
MISSION: Locate & destroy Zephyr One weapon on Dark Side. Avoid Plexor tanks. Disable Matrix ECD's, use tunnel network and jet pack to best advantage. Time is short. END
SOLID 3D
THE NEAREST YET TO BEING THERE
SPECTRUM £9·95 +3 DISC £14·95
COMMODORE 64 £9·95 C64 DISC £12·95
AMSTRAD CPC £9·95 CPC DISC £14.95
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FULL PRICE 20

COMPILED BY GALLUP FOR SINCLAIR USER

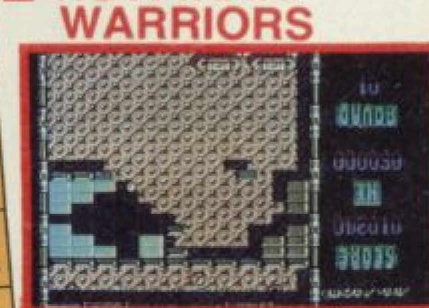
1	(1)	**PLATOOON** Six exciting mini-arcade games – one of Ocean's best	OCEAN	£9.95	8 STARS
2	(2)	**OUTRUN** As close to the original as anyone could expect	US GOLD	£8.95	8 STARS
3	NEW!	**PREDATOR** Macho movie conversion	ACTIVISION	£8.95	10 STARS
4	(3)	**MATCH DAY 2** A highly accurate football implementation	OCEAN	£7.95	7 STARS
5	(4)	**GARFIELD** Easily the best cartoon licence ever	THE EDGE	£8.95	10 STARS
6	(13)	**ADVANCED TACTICAL FIGHTER** Rivetting shoot-'em-up, with some aspects of simulation	D.I.	£8.95	10 STARS
7	NEW!	**ROLLING THUNDER** Stylishly programmed coin-op conversion	US GOLD	£8.99	8 STARS
8	(12)	**NIGEL MANSELL'S GRAND PRIX** Technically superb, but not especially exciting	MARTECH	£9.99	7 STARS
9	(8)	**720°** Virtually flawless arcade game, don't miss this one	US GOLD	£8.99	10 STARS
10	(6)	**MAGNIFICENT 7** Good value compilation of licensed titles	OCEAN	£9.95	9 STARS
11	(9)	**GUNSHIP** Highly impressive combat simulation	MICROPROSE	£9.95	9 STARS
12	(5)	**COMBAT SCHOOL** Can Ocean do no wrong? Anther corker	OCEAN	£7.95	9 STARS
13	NEW!	**RASTAN SAGA** Impressive coin-op conversion	OCEAN	£7.95	8 STARS
14	(7)	**GARY LINEKER'S SUPERSTAR SOCCER** Reasonable, though unremarkable, strategy sim	GREMLIN	£7.99	6 STARS
15	NEW!	**WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS** Excellent selection of surprisingly recent hits	OCEAN	£9.99	9 STARS
16	(14)	**STAR WARS** Superb conversion of the coin-op	DOMARK	£9.95	8 STARS
17	NEW!	**ARKANOID 2** As good as, if not better than, the original	IMAGINE	£7.95	8 STARS
18	NEW!	**DAN DARE 2** Pretty but untimately disappointing arcade adventure	VIRGIN	£7.95	7 STARS
19	(17)	**WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD** Just as good as the original	US GOLD	£8.99	8 STARS
20	RE	**LIVE AMMO** Well thought-out collection of classic games	OCEAN	£9.95	9 STARS

HOT FULL PRICE

Ikari Warriors steams towards the charts slowly, while Arkanoid 2 is in with a (small) bullet at 48, and should be in next month's Twenty. Otherwise, everything seems to be going down except Platoon, which seems unlikely but is logically possible if you think about it enough, honest.



▲ HOT: IKARI WARRIORS



▲ HOT: ARKANOID 2

1	GHOSTBUSTERS
2	KIKSTART 2
3	SUPER STUNT MAN
4	WAY OF THE EXPLODING
5	TRAP DOOR

1	GHOST HUNTERS
2	DEAD OR ALIVE
3	DANGER MOUSE
4	TERRORS OF TRANTOS
5	PLAY IT AGAIN SAM

1	FRUIT MACHINE SIMULA
2	ATV SIMULATOR
3	STEVE DAVIES SNOOKER
4	GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR
5	SOCCER BOSS

▼ IN THE TOP SLOT: PLATOON

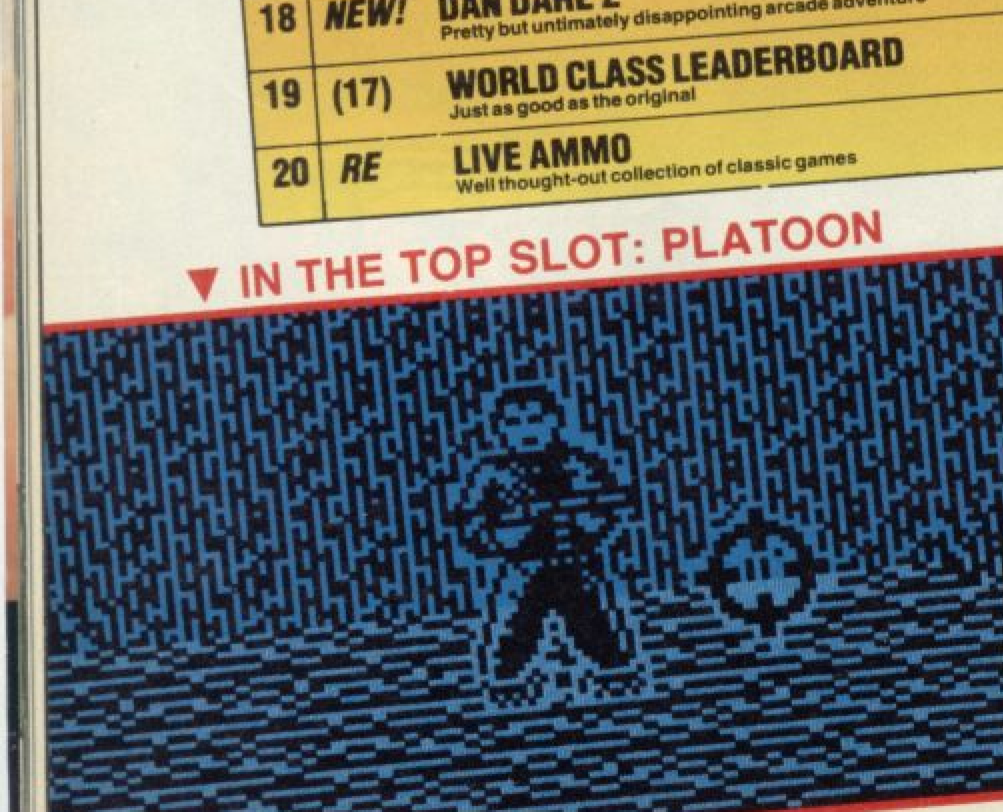


CHART COMMENT – FULL PRICE

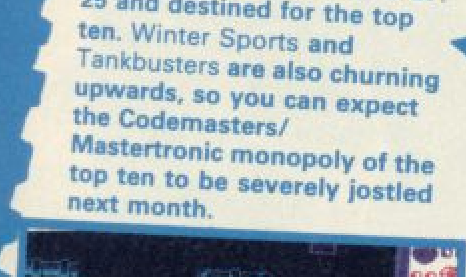
Not much excitement again this month, as Predator rushes towards the number one spot, leaving everything else struggling in its wake. Platoon remains firmly entrenched at the top, while Rolling Thunder can only manage number 7. We are the Champions, a new entry at 15, emphasises the speed with which even successful games are re-released; it only seems like yesterday that we reviewed Rampage, Super Sprint and International Karate Plus.

SU CHARTS

BUDGET 10

HOT BUDGET

Keep your eyes peeled for I-Ball 2 from Firebird, in at 25 and destined for the top ten. Winter Sports and Tankbusters are also churning upwards, so you can expect the Codemasters/ Mastertronic monopoly of the top ten to be severely jostled next month.



▲ HOT: I, BALL 2



▲ HOT: TANKBUSTERS

1	(2)	**GHOSTBUSTERS** Re-release of a not very hot title	RICOCHET	£1.99	7 STARS
2	(1)	**KIKSTART 2** Graphically pleasing, great "just one more go"	MASTERTRONIC	£2.99	8 STAR
3	(3)	**SUPER STUNT MAN** Lots of colourful action and spiffing gameplay	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	8 STARS
4	(4)	**WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST** The first, and arguably the best, 2 player combat game	RICOCHET	£1.99	9 STARS
5	RE	**TRAP DOOR** Well-liked arcade adventure reissued	ALTERNATIVE	£1.99	? STARS
6	(6)	**FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR** Surprisingly, the whole thing is idiotically addictive	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	8 STARS
7	(5)	**ATV SIMULATOR** Cheap and friendly little simulator, not great but OK	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	6 STARS
8	NEW!	**POPEYE** Re-release of the ancient DK'Tronics licence	ALTERNATIVE	£1.99	7 STARS
9	NEW!	**STEVE DAVIES SNOOKER** Another re-release of a full-price game; interesting	BLUE RIBBON	£1.99	6 STARS
10	(9)	**DIZZY** Once you get cracking, you'll never lay it down for a minute	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	9 STARS

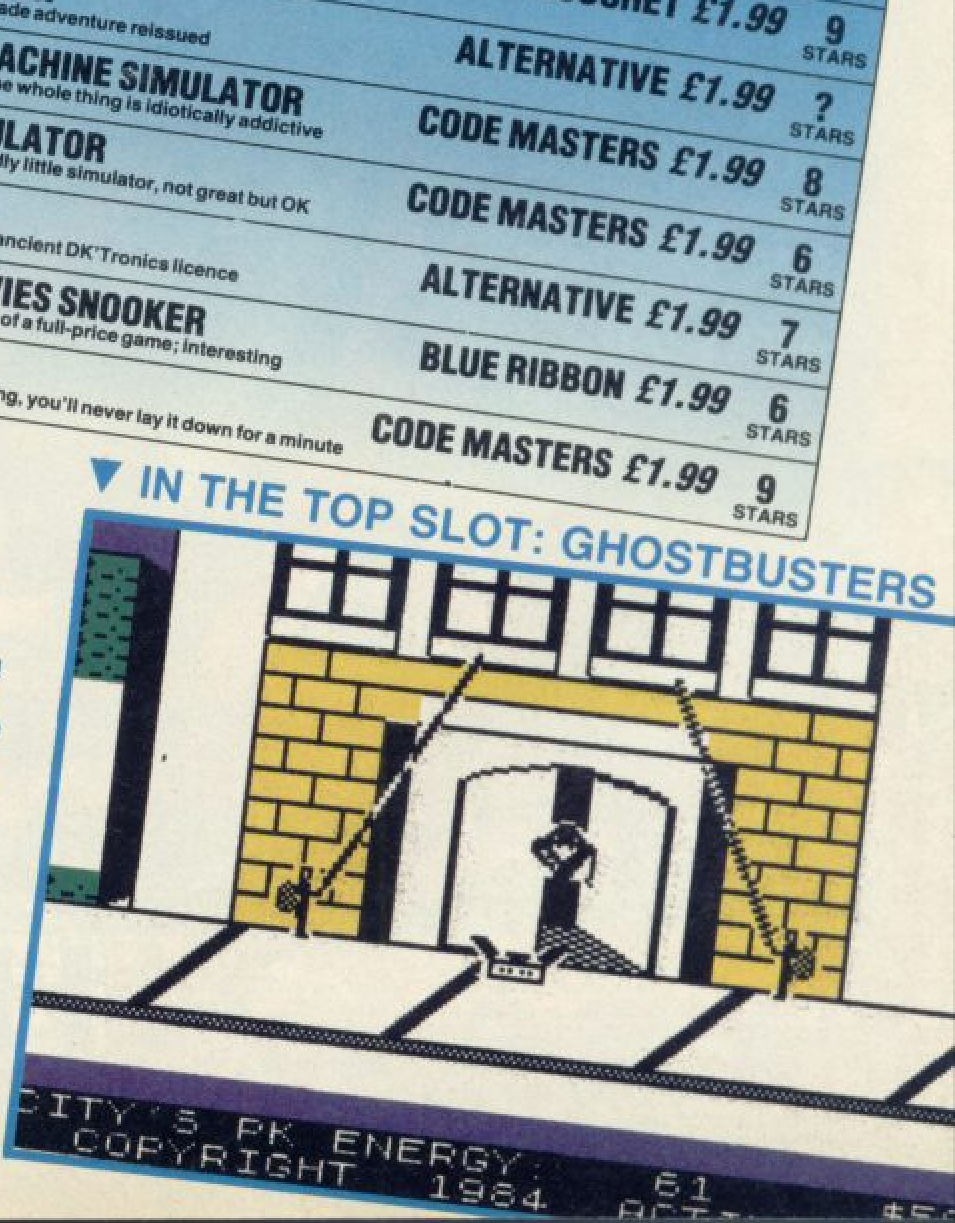
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	MASTERTRONIC	ARCADE
	MASTERTRONIC	
	CODE MASTERS	
ING FI ST	MASTERTRONIC	
	ALTERNATIVE	
	CODE MASTERS	ADVENTURE
	ALTERNATIVE	
	ALTERNATIVE	
S	ACTIVISION	
	MASTERTRONIC	
ULATO R	CODE MASTERS	SIMULATION
	CODE MASTERS	
KER	BLUE RIBBON	
TOR	CODE MASTERS	
	ALTERNATIVE	

CHART COMMENT – BUDGET

Oh cor blimey my lumme! How barecious can you get? The two new entries are boring old re-realese which weren't very good in the first place, and Trap Door has managed to crawl back into the top ten after being elbowed out last month. Why isn't there more action in the supposedly fast-moving budget market? At least Kikstart 2 isn't number one any more.

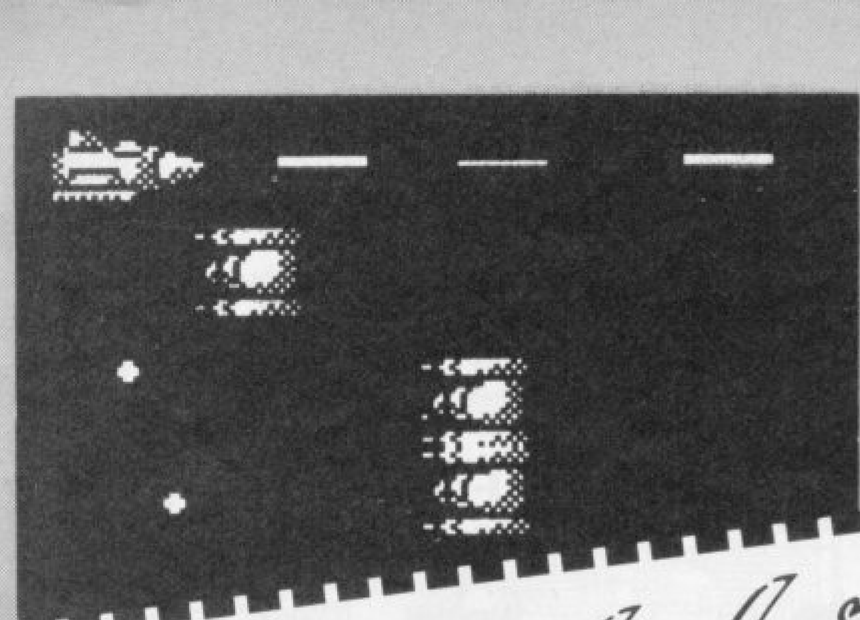
▼ IN THE TOP SLOT: GHOSTBUSTERS



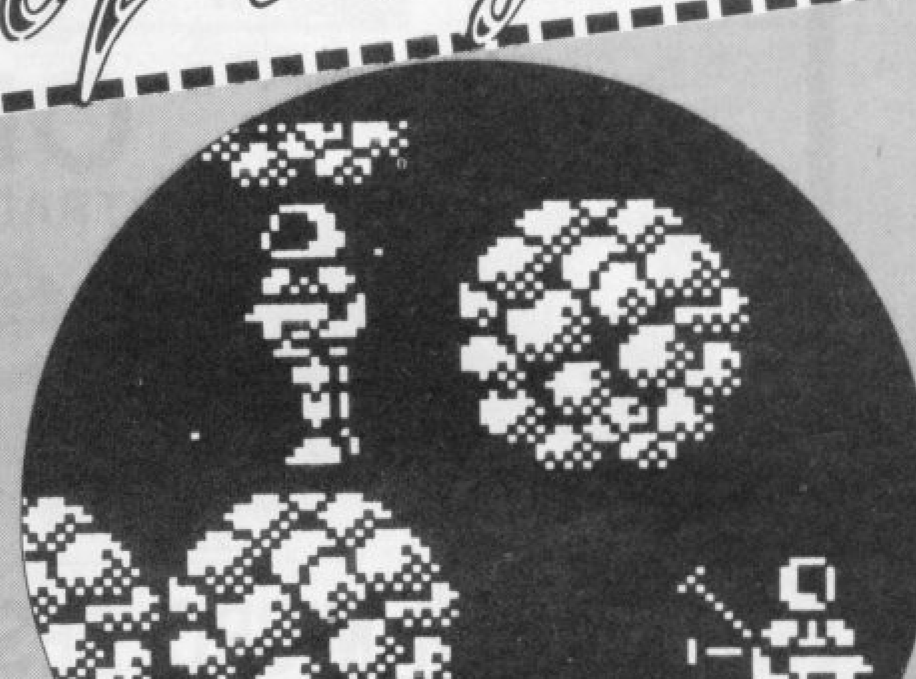
ARCADE REVIEW

This reviewing lark isn't all it's cracked up to be. OK, so it's got loads of perks – as many copies of EastEnders as you can put down your trousers, endless supplies of Gremlin springy promotional "Things" – but there is a definite downside lurking just beyond the flashing warning beacon that is over-enthusiasm.

Soldier of Light is ACE Software's first coin-op tie-in. It's been coded by Christian Urquart, who was responsible for the businss end of Xecutor, ACE's first, and much acclaimed release.



Soldier of Light



Comparatively speaking, Soldier of Light doesn't come close. While X. was original and exciting, Soldier merely contrives to be an acceptable, though not particularly faithful, conversion.

Scrolling from left to right acroiss a range of monochrome backdrops we find Xain, defender of all that is worth defending, and clobberer of everything else. The rate at which you can wipe out the bad guys is determined by the size of your equipment (fnar fnar). By picking up 'P' signs on the ground, you can enhance your firepower from a single-shot no-use-to-anyone affair, to the completely invincible gun which fires three parallel bolts of photon death each time you hit fire.

The enemy troops come at you in waves, having a nagging, irritating effect on your damage meter (top middle of screen). Even so, it's vital that you don't get hit too many times in the early stages of a level, as you'll need all your energy at the end when you complete the End of Level Larger-than-the-rest Alien.

The graphics, as you can see, aren't particularly impressive. They're a bit clumpy, and not especially attractive. Compared with some of the budget material coming from people like Players, it's a pretty poor show. Scrolling is handled merely in a workmanlike manner.

As you move further into the levels, life becomes more and more difficult. Between each level there is a bonus stage in which you find yourself in a spaceship, confronted with wave upon wave of aliens.

Each level has additional nasties. There are birds which fly out of treetrunks and divebomb you, and plants which will swallow you at the drop of a hat. An increasing number of aliens must be dealt with.

It's no great shakes in any department. Somewhat disappointing■

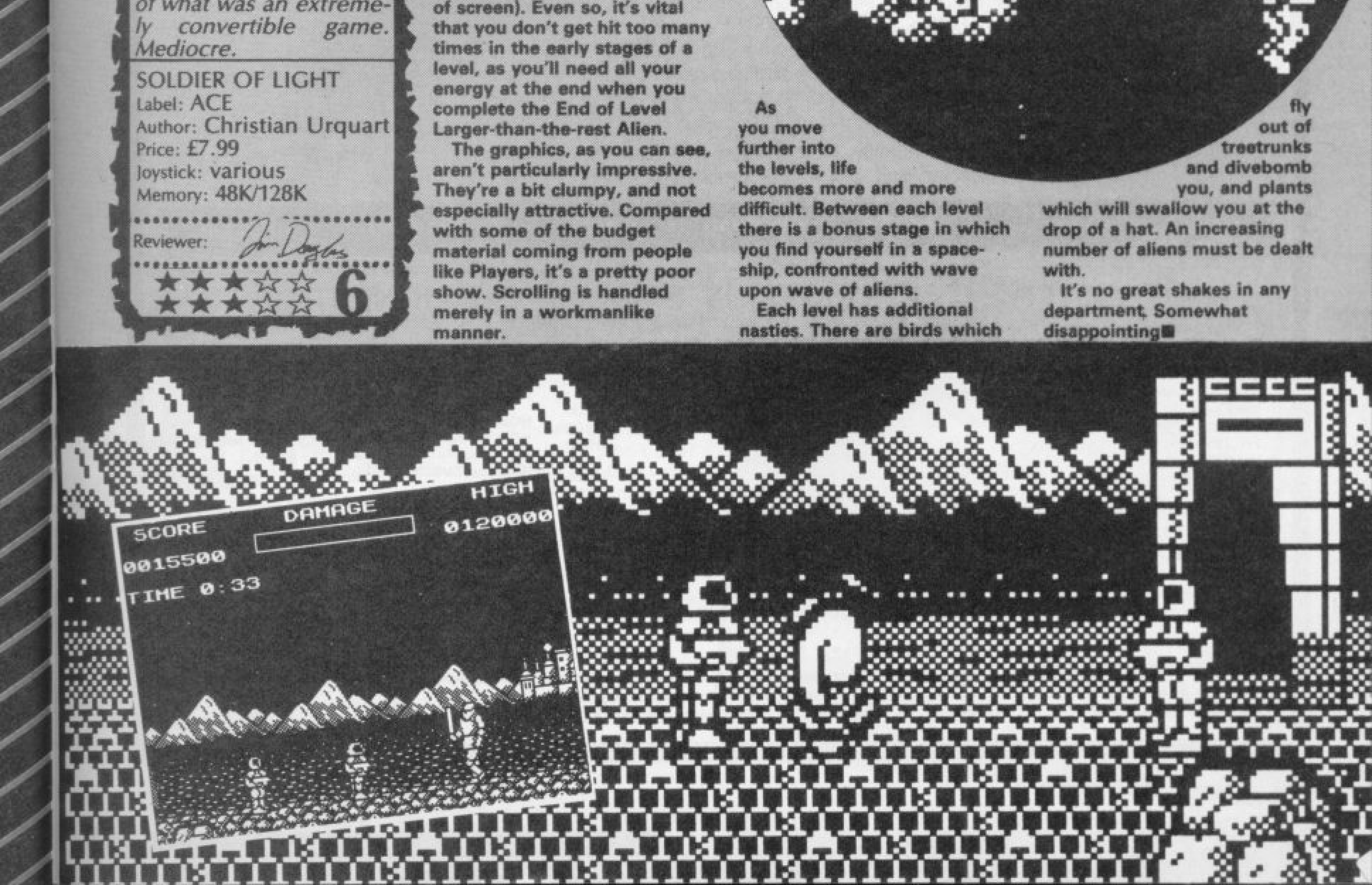
FAXBOX

Reasonable, though disappointing conversion of what was an extremely convertible game. Mediocre.

SOLDIER OF LIGHT
Label: ACE
Author: Christian Urquart
Price: £7.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: [signature]

★★★☆☆
★★★☆☆ 6



ARCADE REVIEW

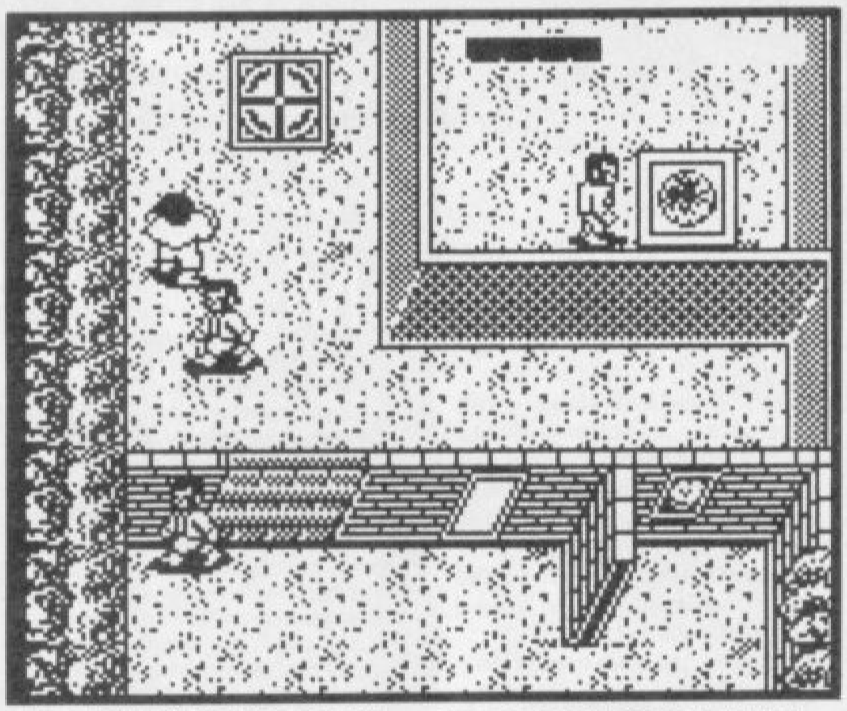
DESOLATOR.

For a vertically-scrolling medieval **Ikari Warriors/ Gauntlet** clone-ette, **Desolator** ain't 'alf bad. Taking the role of fearless hero Mac, you have to invade the castle of the evil Kairos, the Great Salad (well, that's what it looks like on the press release, but I'm sure it's a printing error).

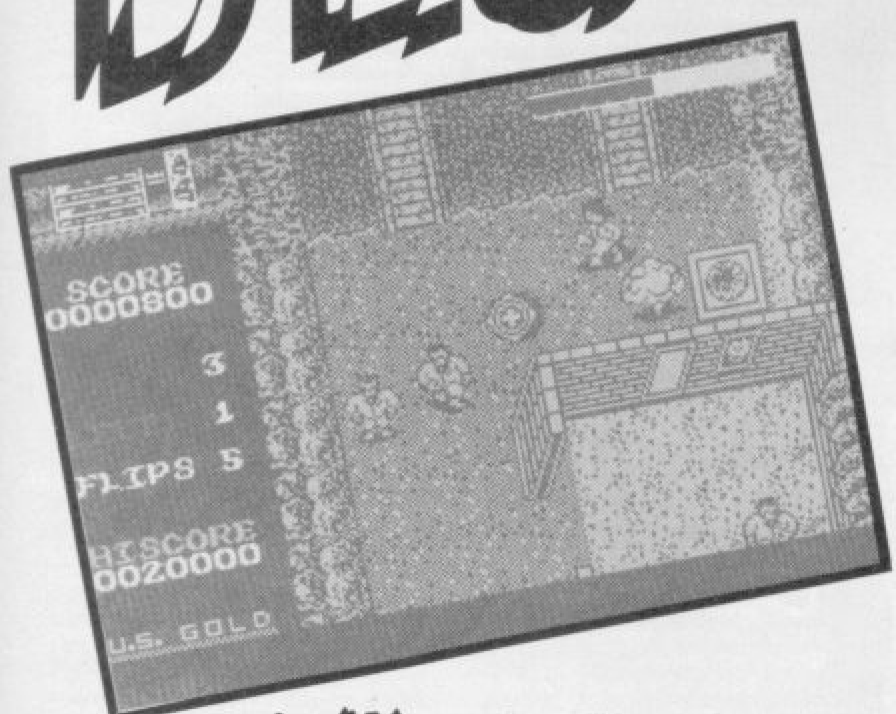
But why, oh why, would even the roughest toughest hero want to risk his life in such a foolhardy enterprise? Well, at heart he must be a great big softie, because it's all in aid of a group of spotty schoolchildren who have somehow become trapped in Kairos' magic mirrors ("Mum! Me head's stuck in this 'ere magic mirror!").

So, proceeding through the levels – loaded separately in 48K, or all together in 128K – what do you come across?

The backgrounds are very nice, shown in perspective from above. You start off with no weapons at all, and only your mighty fists can ward off the enemies who spring up around you in puffs of smoke. Smack them on the nose and they collapse convincingly, but you won't deal so easily with the



armoured knights who pop up later on. They'll throw streams of knives at you, and if you bump into them, just watch your energy meter plummeting faster than a sack of puppies in a lake. (Jenkins, I'm going to report you to the RSPCA if you don't start playing nicely right now! – TH).



FAXBOX

Action-packed cross between ***Gauntlet*** *and* ***Ikari Warriors,*** *without the impact of either*

Label: US Gold
Author: Source Software
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★☆☆ 6
★★★☆☆

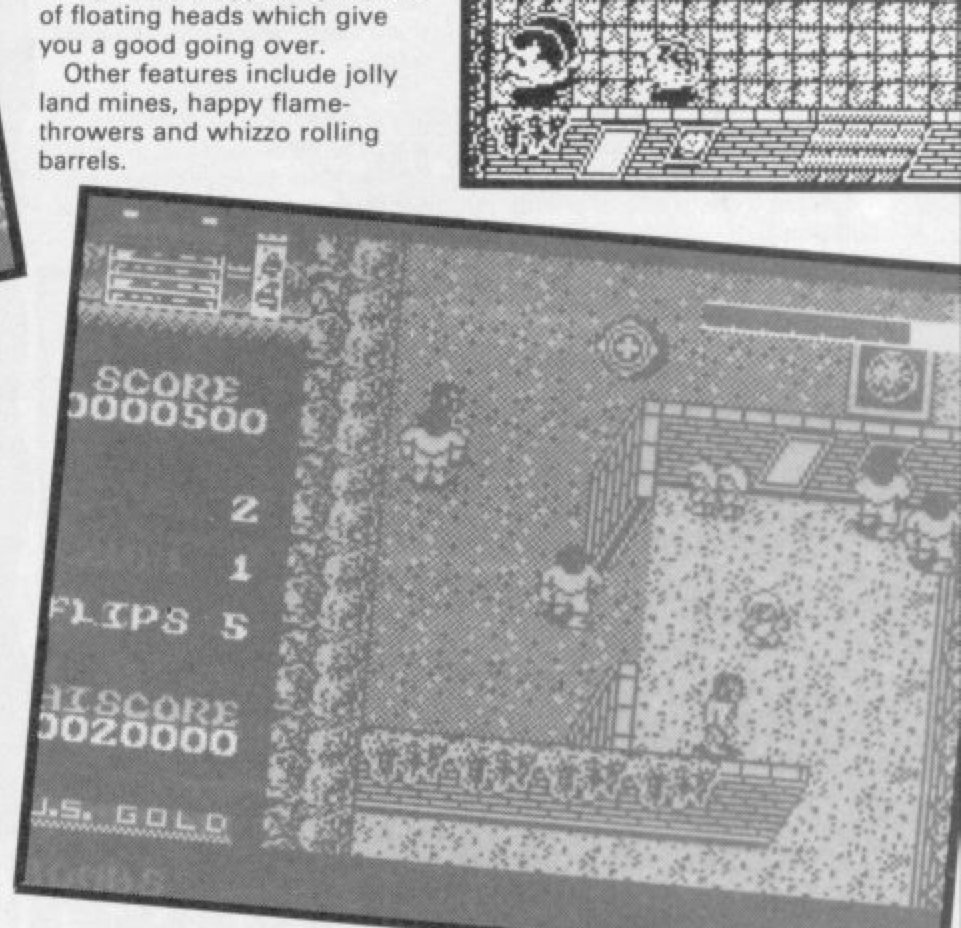
So you'll be wanting some well hard weapons, won't you? Just look for the symbols with the big bombs on them, and you'll get some authentic medieval hand-grenades to fling around. Don't waste them, though, because you'll need some to blast your way through doors and across drawbridges later on.

You'll also come across transporters which flip you to otherwise inaccessible sections of the castle, and giant urns, which, when knocked over, turn all the surrounding baddies into LOADSAMONEY! Pick this up to improve your score and your self-esteem. (Well, the more money, the bigger yer thingy gets, don't it)?

Every so often you'll see a magic mirror set into the wall. Stand in front of it and smash it, and lots of little weeblies run out. You must catch them before they disappear, and if you capture 9 you become temporarily invulnerable, and can walk happily through anything. I think this must be the solution to the chamber at the end of the level, where you find yourself trapped by dozens of floating heads which give you a good going over.

Other features include jolly land mines, happy flame-throwers and whizzo rolling barrels.





Plenty to see and do then, just like Chessington Zoo, but, also like Chessington Zoo, if you've seen it once, you've seen it a thousand times. **Desolator** isn't sufficiently original to earn a top score, and there are plenty of annoying points, like the baddies who look identical to the hero, and the ones who refuse to lie down even when you drop a hand-grenade right on their heads. Nay bad, then, but nothing to split your buskins over■

LASER TAG

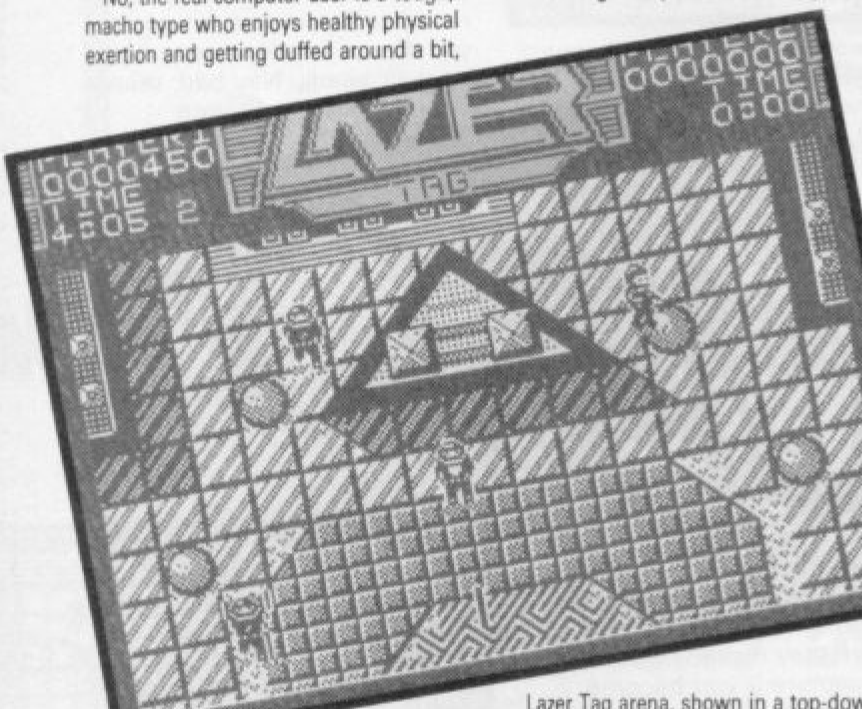
Now, we all know that the public image of the typical computer user is a small, spotty youth in an anorak and tatty trainers, hunched in a semi-darkened room trying to blast the last space pixie on level 99 of **Alien Brain Gobblers** at one o'clock in the morning. But you're not like that, are you? (Cries of "I am, I am!" – shut up, Dillon.)

No, the real computer user is a tough, macho type who enjoys healthy physical exertion and getting duffed around a bit, cos it's all very character developing. So answer me this; what *IS* the point of taking an exciting, energetic game like **Lazer Tag**, which encourages you to get plenty of fresh air and exercise, and turning it into a spotty, pasty-faced computer game?

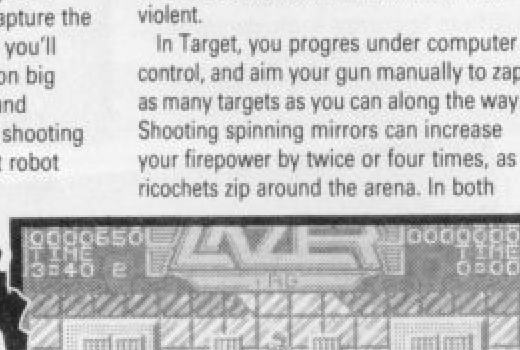
Not that the game doesn't capture the spirit of the original, which, as you'll remember, involves jamming on big plastic helmets, light sensors and bandoliers, and racing around shooting light-pistols at each other or at robot targets.

In the game, you take the role of a lowly cadet at the Lazer Tag Academy, whose aim is to progress through the ranks so that you don't have to spend your free time cleaning other people's boots. To do this you must demonstrate your proficiency at two disciplines; Rabbitoid, a free-for-all shooting contest, and Target, a test of accuracy and skill.

In each game, you move through the Lazer Tag arena, shown in a top-down perspective view with disappointinglyu little colour or detail. Your hero must blast the opposition as they emerge from cover. At this, they throw up their hands in horror and scuttle off the screen; no-one gets killed, remember, 'cos this is all very right on and socially conscious and not at all violent.



In Target, you progres under computer control, and aim your gun manually to zap as many targets as you can along the way. Shooting spinning mirrors can increase your firepower by twice or four times, as ricochets zip around the arena. In both games, you're playing against a timer, and are awarded bonus points for speed and number of targets hit. You lose one of your six lives every time you are shot or run out of time.



Technically competent, **Lazer Tag** misses out on any sort of exciting or involving gameplay. A perfect example of the sort of licensing deal which, I'm afraid, gives licensing deals a bad name■

FAXBOX

Unexciting blasting game based on the popular light-gun package

LAZER TAG
Label: Go!
Author: Probe Software
Price: £8.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K
Reviewer: Jim Douglas

★★★☆☆
★★☆☆☆ **5**

TWILIGHT

MASTERFILE PLUS 3

UTILITY Label: **Campbell Systems** Author: **John Campbell** Price: **£29.95** Memory: **128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

Powerful database package exploiting the advantages of disc to the full

Masterfile Plus 3 is an updated, discified version of one of the most popular database packages for the Spectrum. It works on the same sort of principles as other databases; you can define the sort of information held in each file (up to 60 "fields" per record) enter huge amounts of information (for instance, a thousand names and addresses with up to 254 characters in each), and sort through the info in various useful ways.

Boxes and panels of any colour can be added to the files to create labels, index cards and tables, and you can even perform calculations within records using spreadsheet-like formulae.

The program's totally menu-driven, so even a duffer can use it to create, for instance, address lists, collection files, stock control routines, price lists, club records and so on. Just the sort of thing the Plus 3 was designed for■



★★★★☆
★★★★☆ **8**

SPY VS SPY TRILOGY

ARCADE Label: **Databyte** Author: **First Star** Price: **£9.95** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

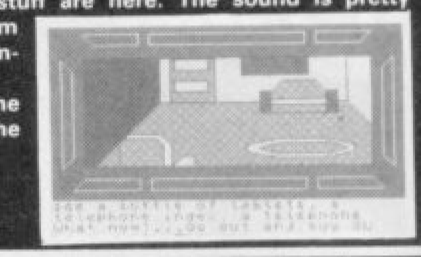
Espionage mayhem with triple value. I think it's good

Racist undertones it may have, but the fact still remains. The black spy hates the white spy, and vice versa. Through the ages and pages of MAD magazine, they have relentlessly pursued each other in an endless attempt to wipe out one another.

Spy vs Spy, the computer game created a split screen two-player environment and was hailed as the best thing since Sam Fox lost her voice. The ideal of laying booby traps for each other in sophisticated attempts at mindless violence was widely loved, and so a market was created for sequels. Two were released. The first set our protagonists at one another's throats upon a desert island, and the second set them somewhere on the north pole. Both were loved, and now you can get these two, and the second sequel all on one tape. Now that's what I call a good buy.

The graphics have been well translated from the original artwork, and all the familiar explosions and stuff are here. The sound is pretty average, but it doesn't detract from the gameplay at all, so who's complaining?

A good value package, and one that will certainly please fans of the strip■



★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ **7**

WEREWOLF SIMULATOR

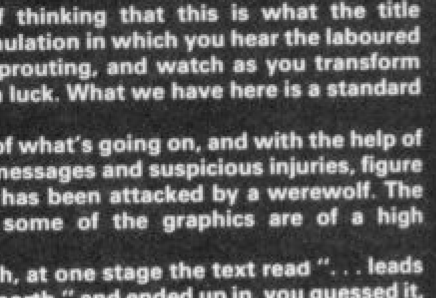
ADVENTURE Label: **Top Ten** Author: **The Screaming Djinn** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Tony "Hairy palms" Dillon**

Regular budget adventure codswallop with an unusually misleading title. For the casual adventurer only

Don't make the mistake of thinking that this is what the title implies, an exciting 3-D simulation in which you hear the laboured breathing, see the fangs sprouting, and watch as you transform into a slavering monster. No such luck. What we have here is a standard GACed adventure.

You begin with very little idea of what's going on, and with the help of various clues such as telephone messages and suspicious injuries, figure out that you're a journalist who has been attacked by a werewolf. The adventure runs quite fast and some of the graphics are of a high standard.

There are some oddities though, at one stage the text read ". . . leads west to 2nd Street," I typed, "go north," and ended up in, you guessed it, 2nd Street. A long curved street? Some common commands such as Examine seem to be ignored much of the time, and overall what promises to be very good from the synopsis ends up as just mediocre■



★★★☆☆
★★☆☆☆ **5**

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Screenshots from Amstrad version.

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Screenshots from CBM64/128 version

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Incoming message on MASK computer – *"We have kidnapped SCOTT TRAKKER and are holding him on the moon. Unless you surrender the entire MASK forces to VENOM you will never see him again."* Signed Miles Mayhem.

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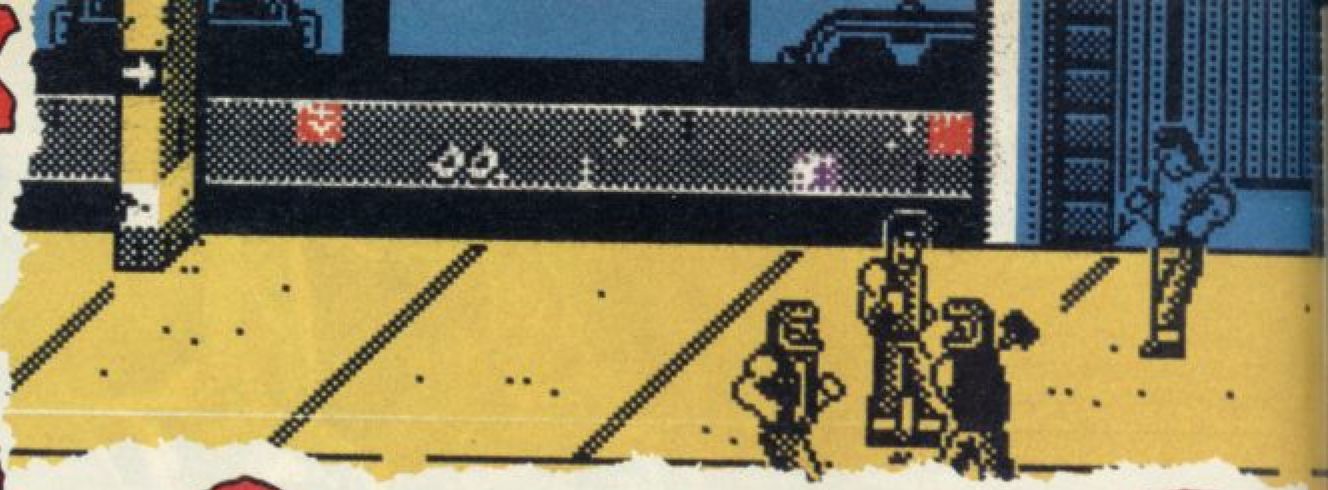
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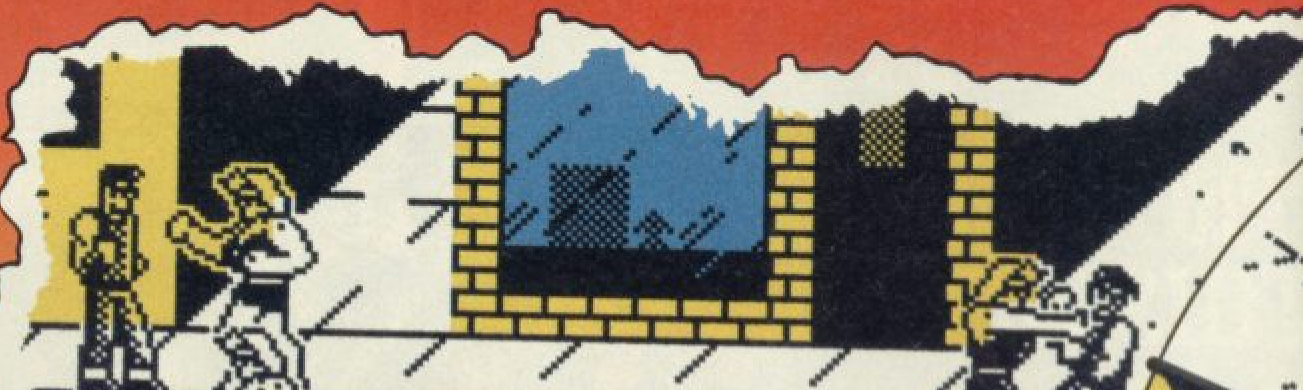
WORLDS APART FROM OTHER SOFTWARE!

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Ker-paff! It was a slick move to say the least. I snuk up behind the ugly goon with the motorcyle helmet and kicked at the back of his knees. The sledgehammer fell from his hand and skittered across the concrete floor of the car park. Howard was there in a flash, wielding the recovered hammer about her head. The goon's biggest mistake was getting off the floor. With a squadge resembling the sound of a water melon falling off the back of a truck, she turned out his lights for good.

TARGET R



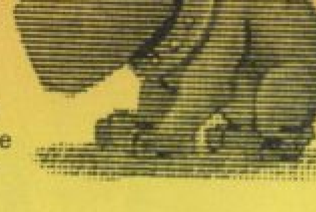


Target Renegade (the title's relevance escapes me) is the sequel to Ocean's smash hit of last year, **Renegade** (oh yes it is). I won't bother to tell you anything at all about the first game, because they're very similar indeed. The only major difference you need consider is that **Target Renegade** has a two player co-operative option, whereby you can team up with a chum and bash the bad guys together.

Set in a maze of underground car parks, dingy alleys and definitely unfriendly bars, **T.R.** as it show now be known, in an affectionate, fluffy marshmallowy sort of way (What sort of a mag do you think this is, you great nance? – GT) Anyway, **T.R.** pits you and a mate against the most unsavoury bunch of characters, all working for the mysterious Mr Big, and hell-bent, for reasons best known to Mr B., Ocean and themselves, on turning you black and blue and into roughly the same shape as pile of sick.

Despite the extraordinary level of violence, **T.R.** is quite appealing to watch. The animation is first rate, and the number of characters on the other side is wide enough to provide the variety that I thought was missing in the first game. There are lunatics on motorcycles, punks, hookers, pimps, nasty sods with sledgehammers, nasty sods with wild dogs, try saying that when you're sick-shaped, all with definite scuffle-orientated intentions.

Should you be lucky enough to make your way to a lift after the first few screens of brutality, you'll find yourself heading down from the street towards the car park area. As you and your partner fight on through the numerous screens, you'll have to get used to adapting your fighting style to suit the conditions in which you find yourself. While you can catch out the stupid bikers with a flying kick, the square-jawed Beastie Boy lookalikes are a smarter group altogether, and you'll have to engage in a more strategic – if that's the word – approach.



FAXBOX

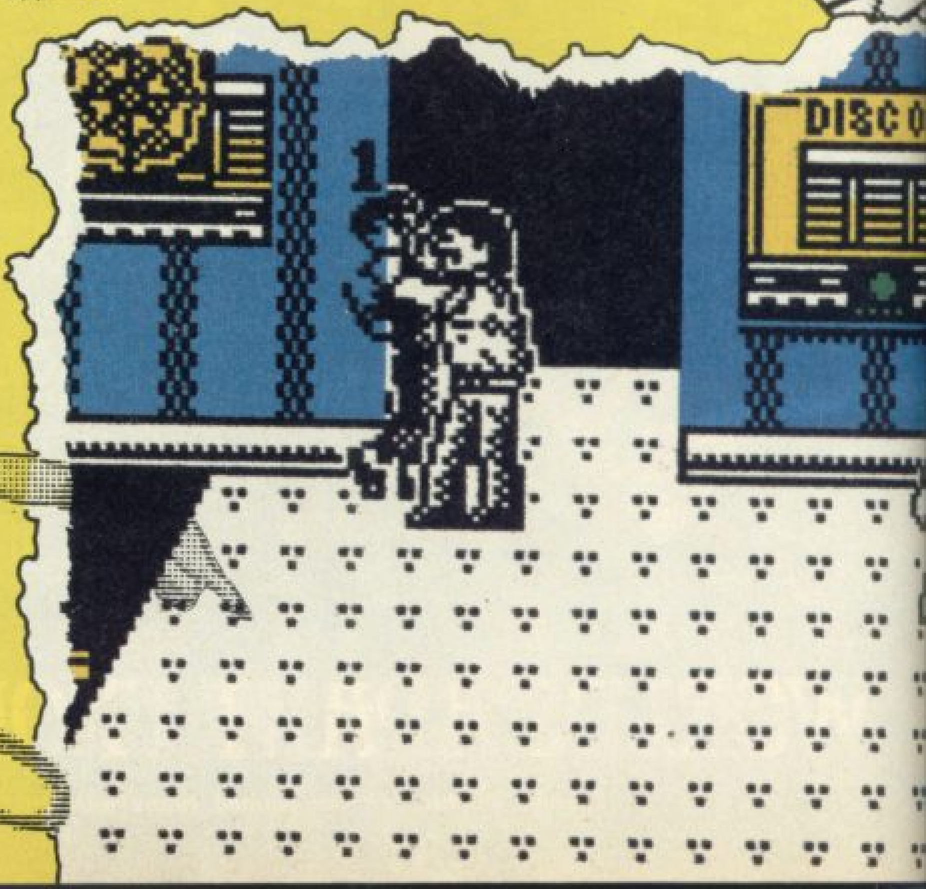
Great to look at and better to play. Fast, exciting and terribly wince-making at points. Top-notch

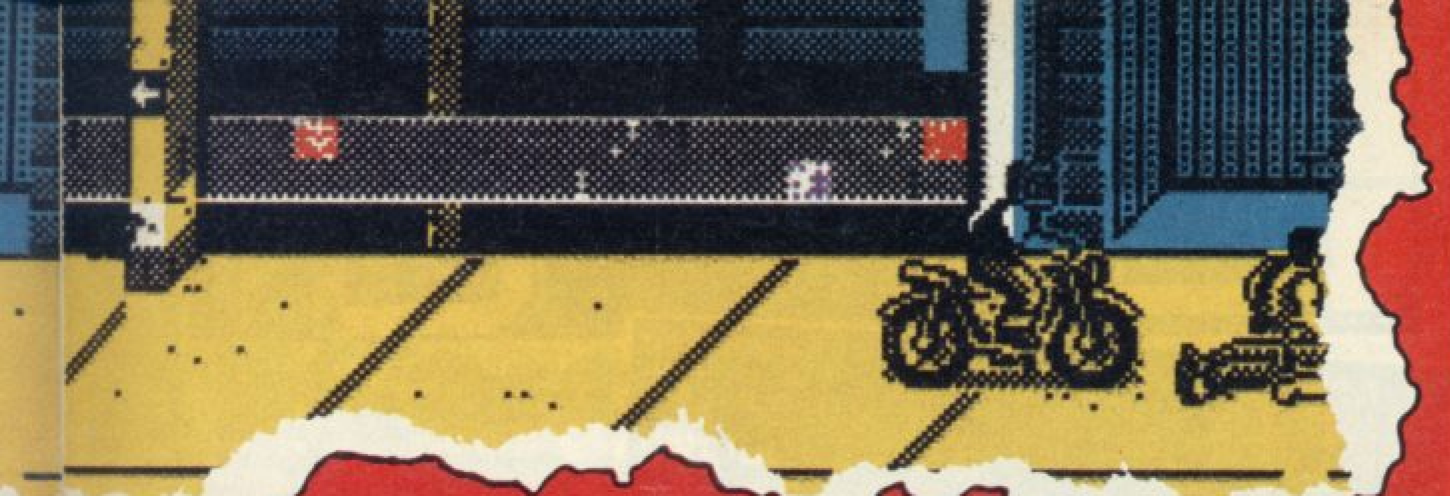
Label: Ocean
Author: Mike Lamb
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer:

★★★★★★★★★★ 10

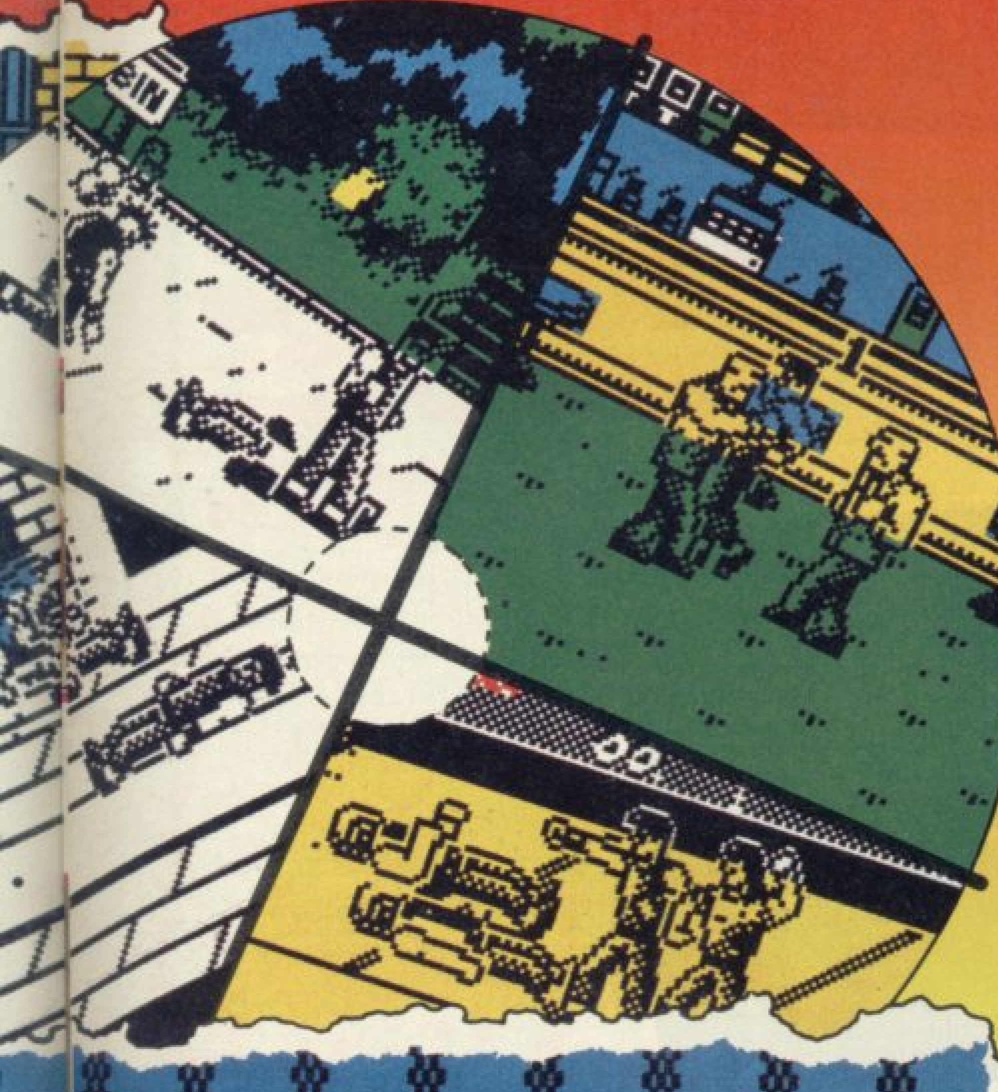






ARCADE ★ REVIEW

RENEGADE



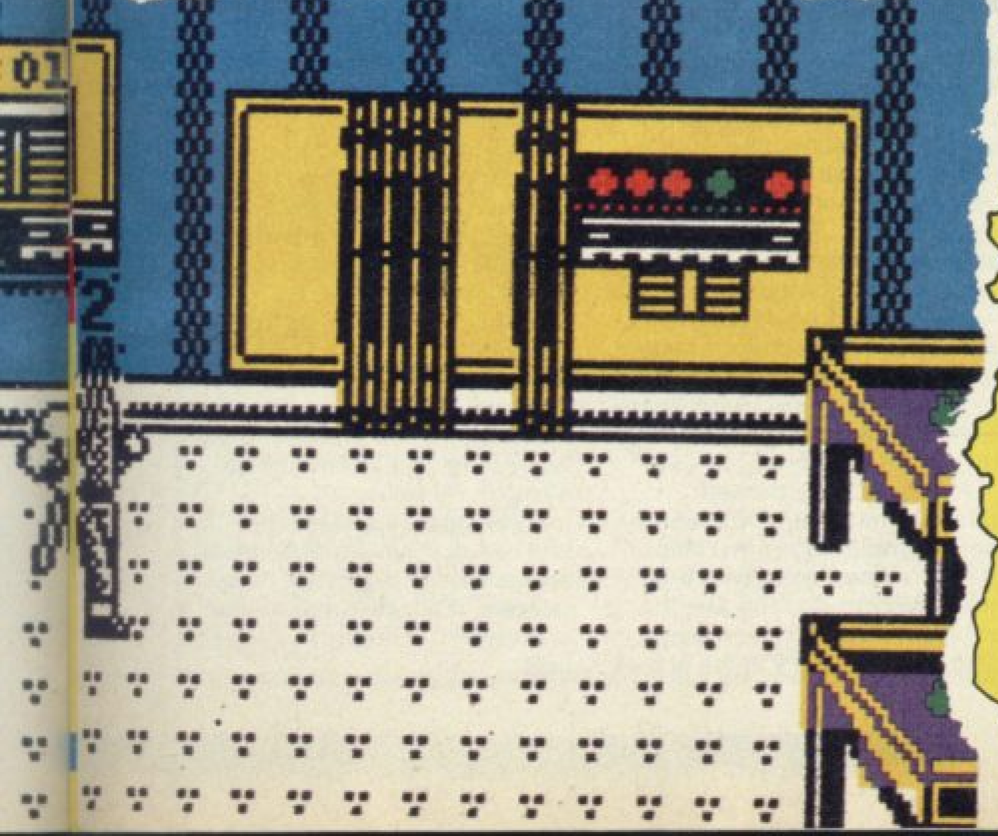
Some of the streets harbour 'ladies of the night', whose knees are best avoided. Their bosses, nasty looking characters in fedora hats and sharp suits, are deadly. Every so often they'll casually reach into their jacket, pull out a gun and shoot you down. Of all the scenes though, my favourite is in the pool hall.T-shirted hustler shuffle up and swing wildly at you, jumping back and forth, whilst other bad guys come around the back.

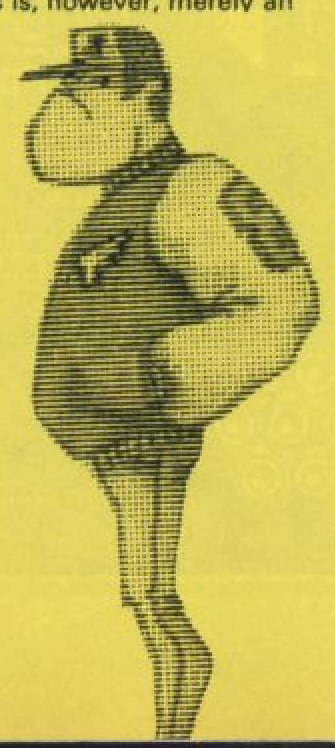
The best part is that the weapons carried by the enemy can be picked up and used once they've been knocked down. The sledgehammer is particularly handy in tight spot; you can fell the goons like trees and head for the exit, sharpish.

Target is similar in many ways to the coin-op **Double Dragon**; two players fighting as a team, various opponents and backgrounds, and the ability to pick up and use weapons left on the floor. It's definitely the most addictive game of its type I've played on the Spec. A slight niggle is that when playing by yourself (barf, chortle, etc) there isn't a computer-generated buddy to help you out. As a result, life is an awful lot more difficult, as many screens are virtually impossible to surive without a degree of teamwork. This is, however, merely an obligatory gripe, and it shouldn't stop you from rushing out and buying **Target Renegade** before you've had time to spit.

As the baddies come on to the screen, you've got to get yourself in the best position possible to defend yourself. Standing in the centre of the screen is usually a smart idea, because although the bad guys come at your from every angle, at least you can run in any direction. Many a time I found myself totally surrounded in a tight corner with bad guys six-deep all around me. While it's possible to get out of some of the tightest scrapes, assuming your buddy is thinking quick enough, discretion is occasionally the better part of valour – there's no point wading in and getting a beating when you could hovver around, picking off people one-by-one.

Ocean have included a rather charming feature for the more individually minded players out there. Should your mate get a little too cocky with his pool cue, and start flouncing around in a none-too helpful manner, you can sneak up behind him and smash him in the back, grab his stick and bash him in the face. Realism at any price, I see■



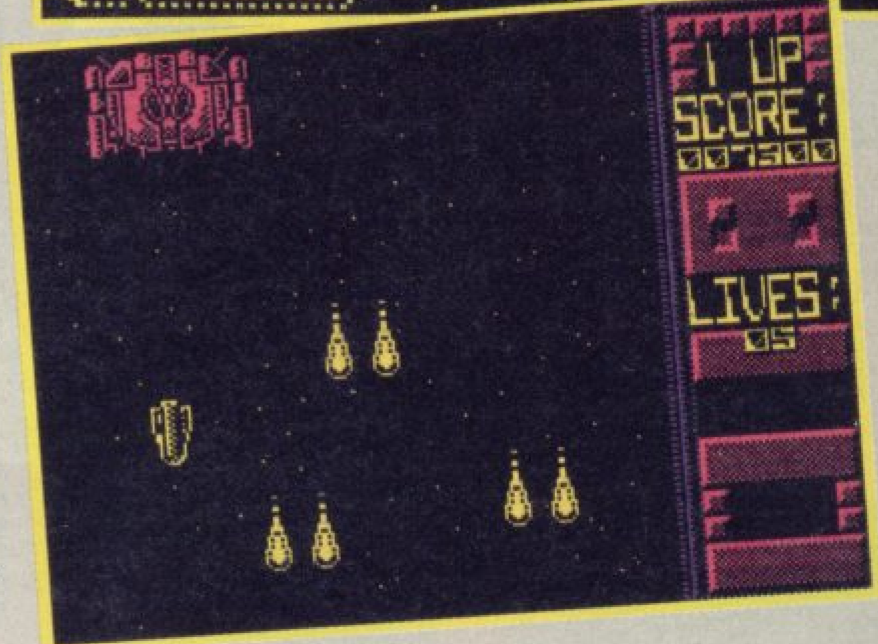


Hints and Tips:

- Work as a team! Fight back-to-back and try to progress across the screens together
- Concentrate on knocking down and killing each baddie in turn. If they keep getting up, you'll be stuck on one screen for ages. Put them on the deck and punch them in the head until they disappear
- Grab those weapons! As soon as anyone drops a poolcue or a hammer, get to it and get swinging
- Don't hang around more then necessary. Make constant progress

ARCADE REVIEW





SABOTAGE

Oh woe! Woe again. Our happy planet is under attack and is practically falling apart because of the never ending waves of armed spaceships. Why are these ships attacking? Who knows. All you need to know actually is that you are a mercenary who has been hired to help destroy the might of the hideous 20-headed 3-tentacled aliens who now control a reign of terror over said planet. Thankfully, you're not alone. The aliens are organised into 8 groups, and a 5th columnist rebel has smuggled him/herself aboard each of the sector HQs. You must make contact with them and collect pieces of blueprint they give you. Only with the blueprint safely in your hands will you have any hope of saving your planet and its people.

Enough of this tosh. Sabotage is nothing new. I don't care what impression I just gave you. I know the plot makes the game sound wildly exciting. I know the plot gives the impression of stunning originality. But the game is, in fact, simply **Lightforce** without the bells, whistles and colour. For those of you who read *Crash*, and therefore have absolutely no idea what **Lightforce** is and are probably not allowed to use sharp instruments, such as candles, this means that **Sabotage** is a vertically-scrolling shoot-everything-that-moves-em-up. You control a single spaceship up a series of vertical 'corridors' and have to defend yourself from incessant attacks by waves of maurading enemy craft. There are asteroid fields to navigate, plus the maze of birds. Huh, you say, what maze of birds? Oh, didn't I mention them?

After you have passed through the level, you meet the normal multi-hit mothership. Hit her a few times, which is really easy to do, and she'll explode. You then land your ship on the runway at the end of each level, and you're into the sub-game.

A small maze appears, with you at one end and the 5th C. rebel in the middle. You have to work your way through the maze and avoid the divebombing birds which appear at the top of the screen, wait a few seconds, then fly directly downwards and vanish at the bottom. One you reach the 5CR, you collect the piece of blueprint, and it's time to trot off to the next level. Trot, trot, trot.

Sabotage is a very good game. Not it's not often you hear me say that. I like it because it plays very well, although your ship moves very slowly, too slowly for any really fast joystick waggling. Still, you can speed it up temporarily by collecting a speed icon. Unfortunately the speed doesn't last very long and you soon find yourself back at snails' pace.

Graphics are average for this kind of game. Your ship is animate, well enough and the crafts move very smoothly. The aliens are varied enough to be interesting, though things do get a bit repetitive.

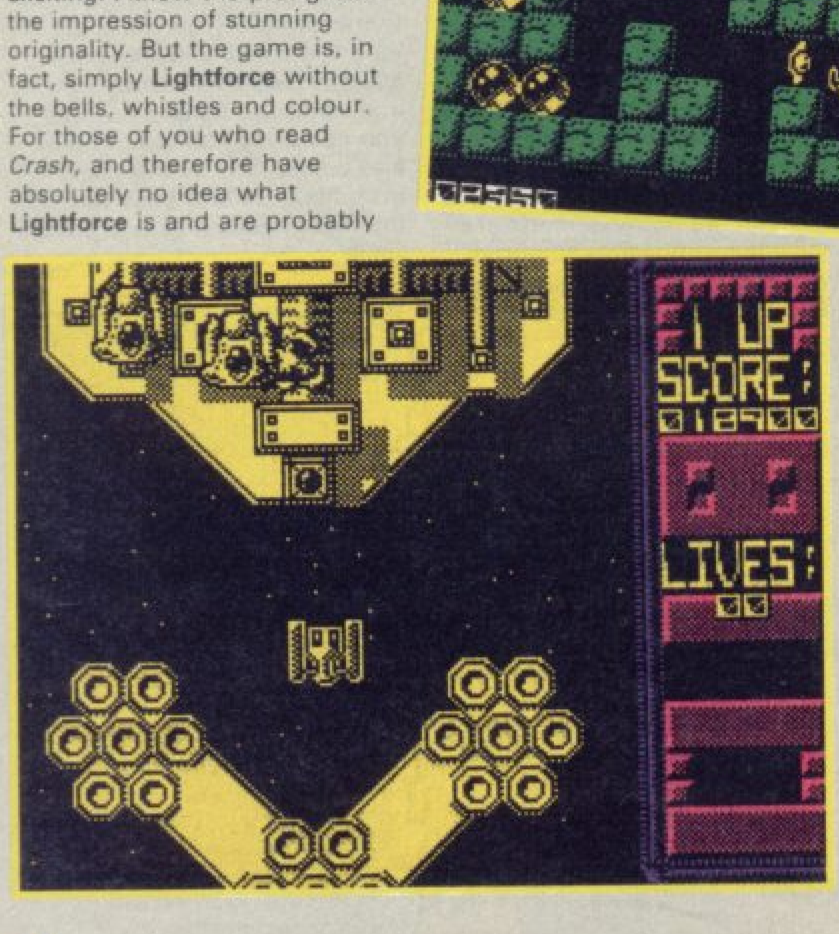
A very playable shoot 'em up, and one that has done Zeppelin proud. One of the better budget releases around, it makes you want to see more from Zeppelin■



FAXBOX

Playable upward scroller with some nice graphics. A worthwhile budget buy

SABOTAGE
Label: Zeppelin Games
Author: Nicky Rutter
Price: £2.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Tony Dillon
★★★★☆ 8



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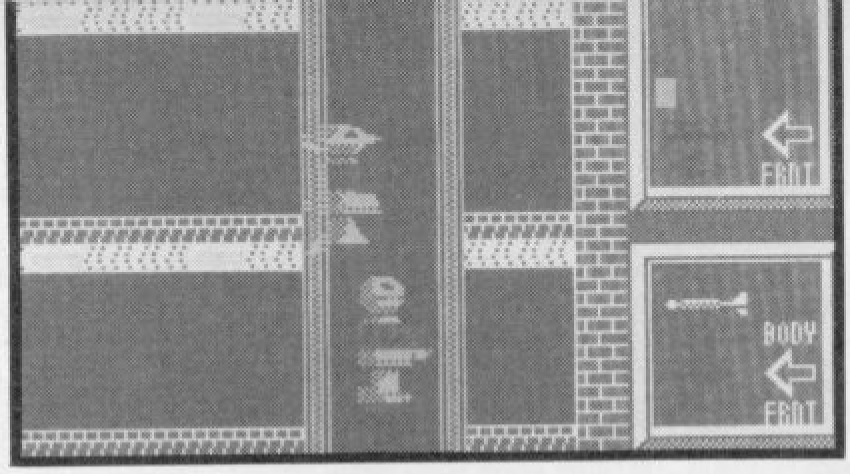
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ARCADE REVIEW

CYBERKNIGHTS

So who is this bodger R. T. Smith, that he gets his name emblazoned on the package of his new game **Cyberknights**? I'll tell you – he's the author of lots of strategy games, and if you ask me he should have stuck with what he's good at. The trouble is that **Cyberknights** ia a very, very, very, very, very good idea, but the programming just isn't that hot. The graphics are dire and the fancy icon controls don't do much to conceal the fact that all you really have to do is move around a maze zapping robots. Boresville Wyoming, you may well say.

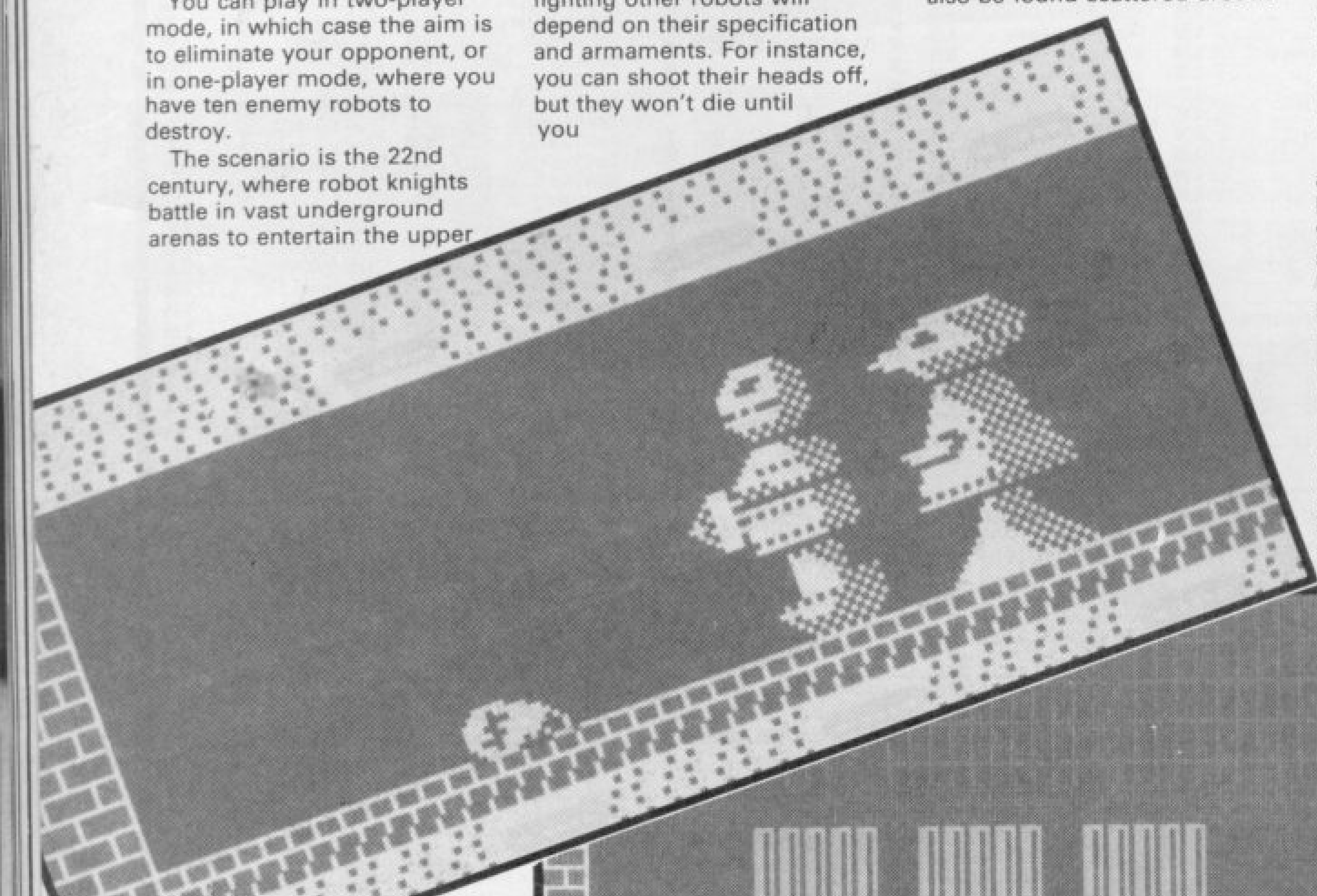
You can play in two-player mode, in which case the aim is to eliminate your opponent, or in one-player mode, where you have ten enemy robots to destroy.

The scenario is the 22nd century, where robot knights battle in vast underground arenas to entertain the upper classes. You move left and right through the tunnels and up and down through lift shafts. If you're equipped with a jet pack, you can fly within the limits of your fuel. Your success in fighting other robots will depend on their specification and armaments. For instance, you can shoot their heads off, but they won't die until you destroy the body. An icon display allows you to select weapons including lasers, mines and radiation grenades.

Prize money is earned by destroying enemies, and can also be found scattered around the arena. There are plenty of helpful tactics to learn, like placing mines where your enemy will become trapped, or taking cover in liftshafts and emerging to fire. The clever part, though, is that although you can fight with default designs of **Cyberknights**, you can lash together your own using the character designer on the B side of the tape.

Cost, strength, weight, size and power consumption all have to be taken into account as you use the pointer and icon system to cobble together a knight. Completed designs can be named, saved on tape and re-edited for future games.

Why do you go funny stripey colours in the lift? Why are there such atrocious colour clashes when two robots collide? **Cyberknights** is best avoided unless you have an aversion to slick programming and well-designed graphics■





FAXBOX

Clever concept, terrible execution, put this design-it-yourself combat game on dodgy ground

CYBERKNIGHTS
Label: CRL
Author: R. T. Smith
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★☆☆
★★☆☆☆ 5



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COMPETITION

WHOOSH!

Verrrwooosh! Splat! Arghhh! Next time I'm sticking to flower arranging. Yes *Skate Crazy* is too tough for ordinary guys – you have to be a roller-skate hero to make it, as you'll know from playing the demo on this month's fab Megatape.

If you want the full thrill, though, you'll have to get the complete game from Gremlin. And here, we can help you.

On this page you'll see a *Skate Crazy* cartoon which tells you a bit more about the game and the rules. Jump the gaps! Spin around madly! Wear a silly hat! And more!

But wait . . . what's this I see? Our cartoonist has gone mad with the Tippex and made five subtle (well, enormous really) alterations in the first frame, which you see blown up. Can you spot the differences? Course you can!

So RING the differences on the coupon, FILL IN your name and address, CUT it out and send to SUPER TURBO NUTTER SKATE CRAZY CONTEST, Sinclair User, 14 Holkham Road, Orton, Peterborough PE2 0UF. Closing date is June 30th.

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SKATE CRAZY

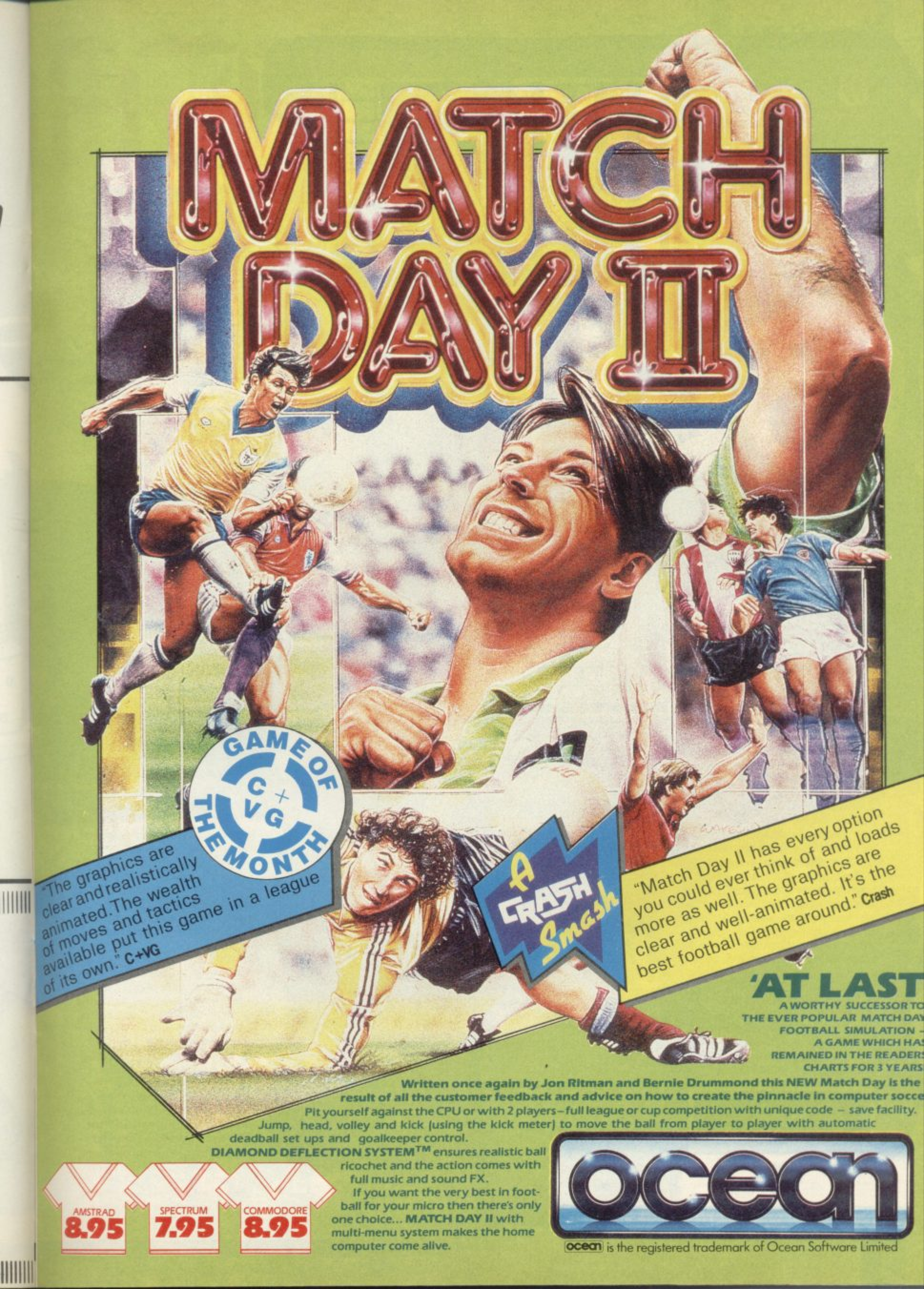


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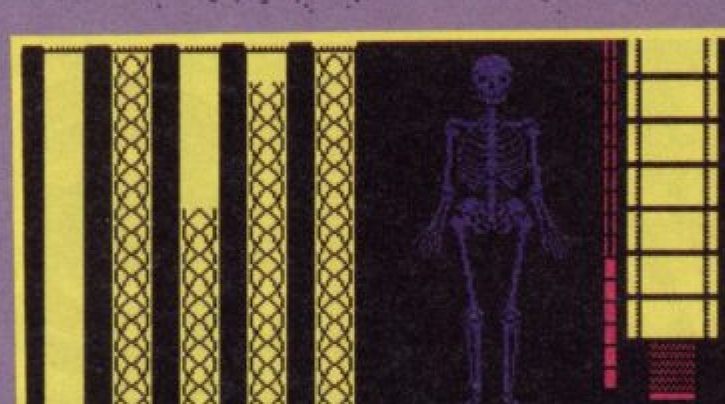
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Gothik

Don't dismiss **Gothik** as just another **Gauntlet** clone, or just another **Dungeons-and-Dragons** role-playing game. Although it's pretty close in many ways to Firebird's successful **Druid, Gothik** seems to have greater depth of gameplay and more thought behind it.

Set in the usual maze of catacombs, viewed from above, **Gothik** features the musclebound Olaf and the mystical Olga, who look pretty similar apart from Olga's extra two pixels. Olaf is better at the strong-arm stuff, and Olga at magic, as you'll see when you access the status display by pressing the space bar.

This display shows the potency of your three main weapons – arrows, fire and lightning bolts – and whatever charms and spells you have collected on the way. In the centre of the screen is a skeleton, parts of which glow as you discover pieces of the wizard which are the object of your quest. There are seven levels, each with four sub-levels accessed by transporters. Of course, the catacombs are also haunted by sundry nasties, including giant gorillas, walking eyeballs, and, at the end of each level, a guardian demon who can only be defeated with the right combination of spells.

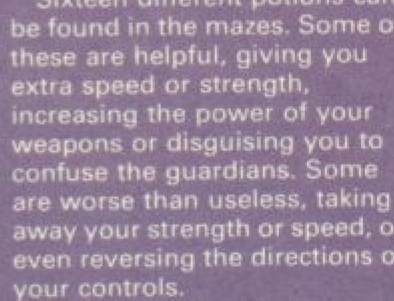
Sixteen different potions can be found in the mazes. Some of these are helpful, giving you extra speed or strength, increasing the power of your weapons or disguising you to confuse the guardians. Some are worse than useless, taking away your strength or speed, or even reversing the directions of your controls.

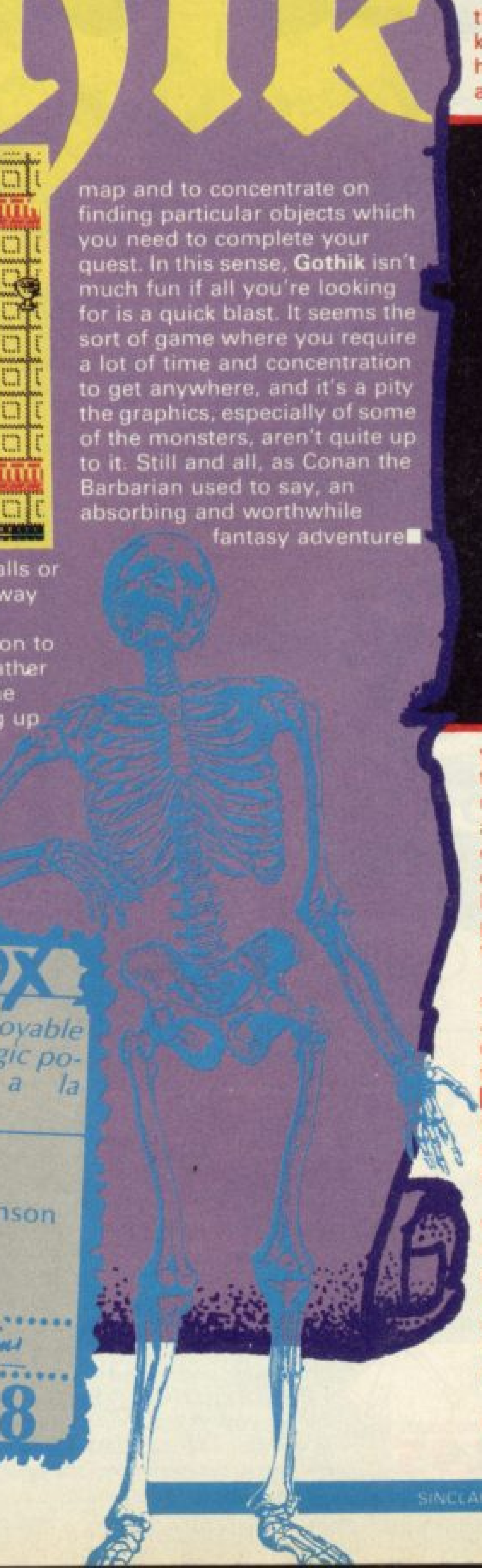
If you collect gold, you can exchange it for extra strength or magical power if you are running low. It's also worth bearing in mind that there are some situations where you will find yourself trapped unless



you have sufficient fireballs or firestorms to blast your way free.

Unless you pay attention to what you're doing, it's rather easy to spend a long time wandering around, using up potions and zapping the baddies without achieving anything. It's best to make a map and to concentrate on finding particular objects which you need to complete your quest. In this sense, **Gothik** isn't much fun if all you're looking for is a quick blast. It seems the sort of game where you require a lot of time and concentration to get anywhere, and it's a pity the graphics, especially of some of the monsters, aren't quite up to it. Still and all, as Conan the Barbarian used to say, an absorbing and worthwhile fantasy adventure■





FAXBOX

Complex and enjoyable shooty-shooty magic potion nonsense a la Gauntlet

GOTHIK
Label: Firebird
Author: Paul Hutchinson
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆ 8

CR

As shoot-'em-ups go, **Sidewize** was one of the best of '87. What better could Firebird do than a sequel? But, as has been proven time and time again, the word 'sequel' can bode misfortune. Not just in the games world, either. **Superman 4,** for example. Thankfully, **Crosswize** falls into the slim category of games that at least equal, if not better, the original and continues where **Sidewize** left off.

After saving the 4 worlds of thingy, whatsit, erm and you know, the universe became a happy place. Your reputation as a hero grew and grew, as did



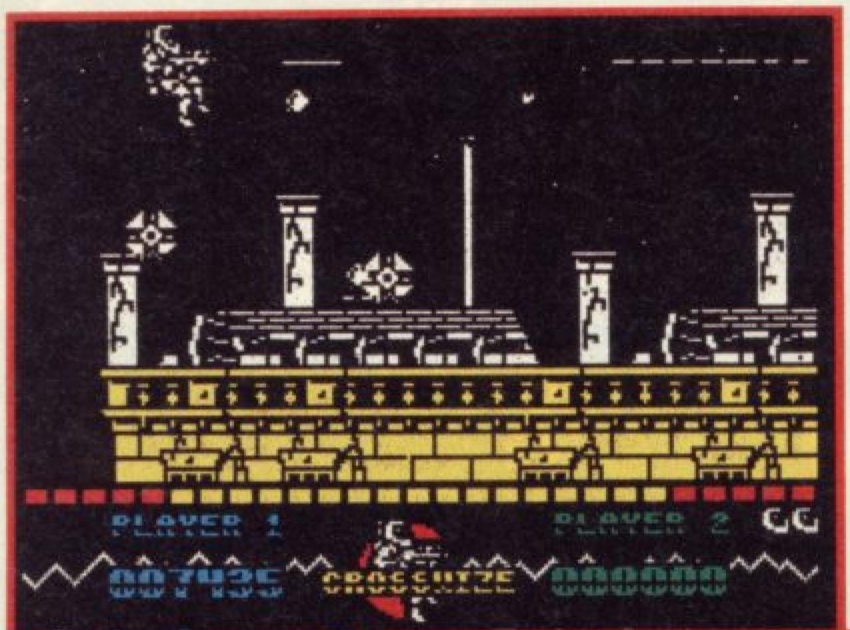
your head. Peace has reigned triumphant, until now. Lots more aliens have decided to be a pain in a place where the sun don't shine, and you have been conscripted to help on the front line. Well, not exactly help. To put it another way, you **are** the front line.

Following on in the trend of such games as **Soldier of Light** and indeed, **Sidewize, Crosswize** places you as a lone fighter, without ship or copy of SU, expected to save the show by moving through a right to left scrolly landscape, shooting anything that comes at you.

The aliens attack wave after wave, and good golly, there's a lot of them. All different shapes and sizes too. Some fly in set patterns, some zoom by and shoot at you, some dive at you kamikaze like *(Someone takin' my name in vain? K.B.).*

The diamond shaped objects and the spheres are the ones

ROSSWIZE



HINTS AND TIPS

- **When flying over buildings, beware of gaps between them. Fountains of rocks usually spout from them**
- **Try not to move about too much, as aliens sometimes come from some quite unexpected angles**
- **In the sections where you have to weave between slabs of rock, keep at the bottom. This helps you to get out of the way when they start getting faster**
- **A common tactic is to hold down the fire button to fire at a very fast rate. Don't. Aim first, then fire. This prolongs the length of time you have your special weapons**



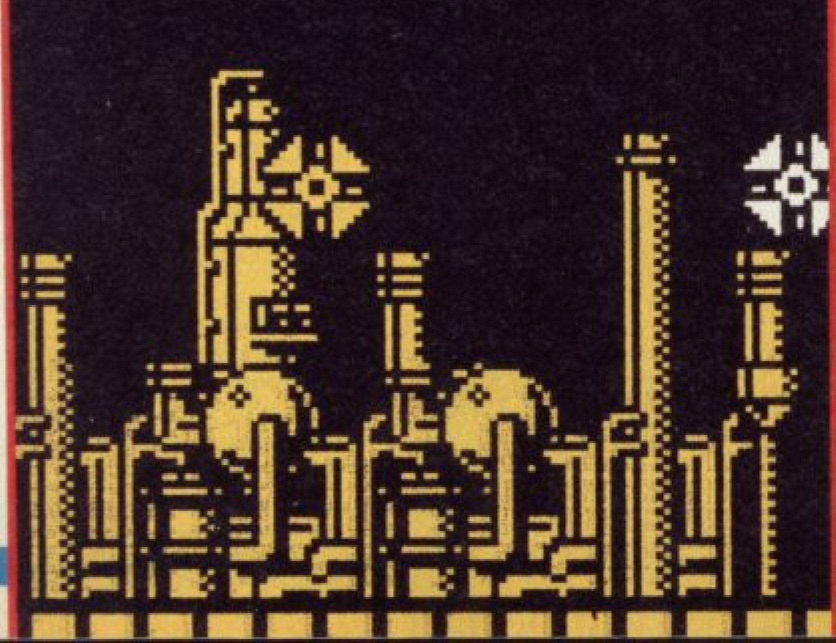
FAXBOX

Quality follow up to a quality game. Roll on the next -wize

CROSSWIZE
Label: Firebird
Author: Weatherill/ Grunes
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★★★★★★★ 10



that travel in set patterns. No problem, bang bang. Then there are the large slab like things that come on from all sides of the screen. Occasionally, if you really have bad luck, a wave of craft will fly on from just behind you, and loop around you, shooting as they go past. Perhaps a little help is needed in the form of some extra weaponry.

In a lot of places (to start with) lie various tokens. These either give you extra energy or, huuuuuugh (sharp intake of breath), an extra weapon. Not any ordinary nancyboy weapon either, but a real instrument of destruction. You can get a portable missile silo, enabling you to fire 5 missiles in a forward direction. You can get fan bullets, which fire outwards in the direction you are facing, as well as complete surrounding bullets, that fire outwards from your person. A shield can be found and used to get past 'that bit'. You know the bit you can never get past normally. Finally, a smart bomb, which kills everything currently on screen.

In some games, you get a set amount of lives. In others, you get an energy level. In **Crosswize,** you get both. You instantly lose a life, if you crash into something (ground feature, bullet, other sprite). Also, your energy is continually dropping, and must be topped up with the help of the energy icons. Should your energy drop to a sufficiently low level, you begin to slow down. Slow to the point that you die.

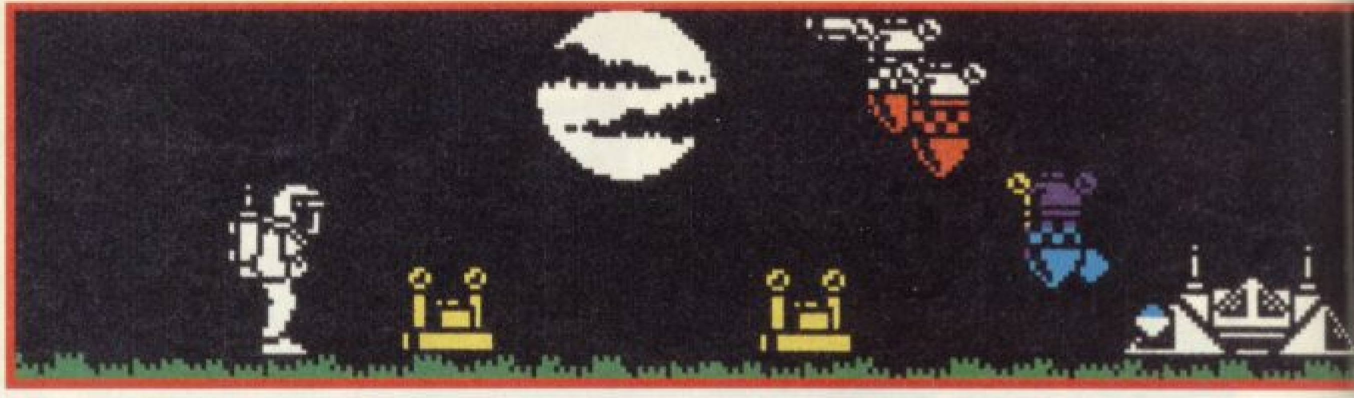
In this game, it's not just the enemy that are a lethal threat. The ground is too. You fly over various buildings, and most of them have aerials, chimneys that spit bullets and all manner of strange artefacts.

To get to the next level, you must destroy the multi hit mother ship. All I can tell you is that she is big, at least twice the size of your little sprite, and very hard to kill without additional weapons.

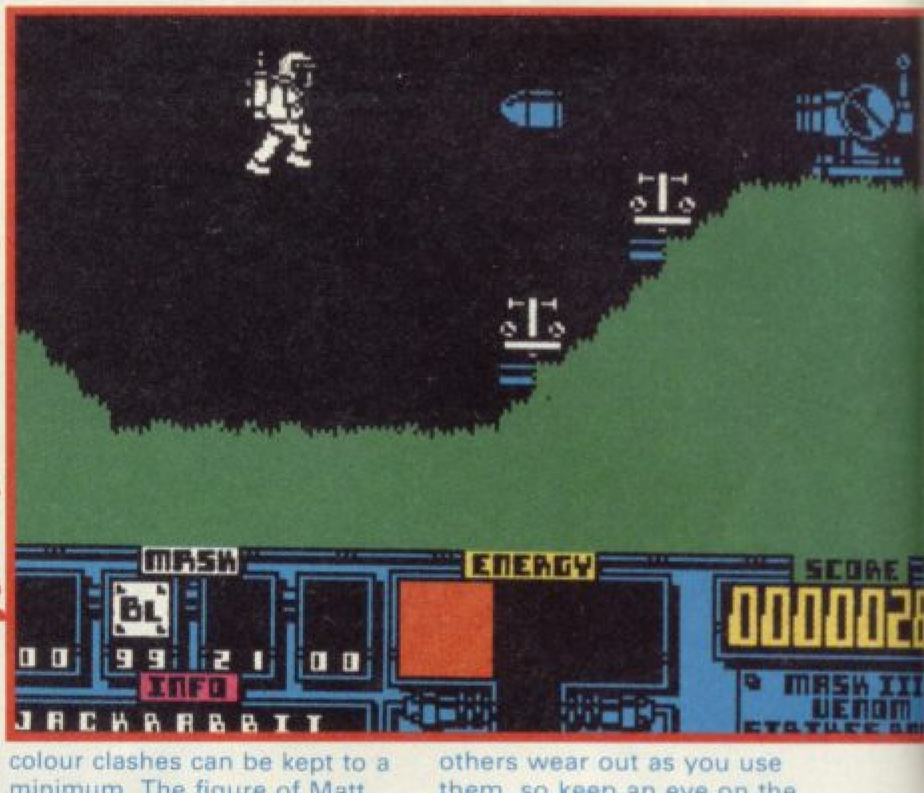
I'd go as far as to say that **Crosswize** plays better than most of the recent Spectrum games I've seen. The game moves along at a very fast pace, though never too fast to be confusing. The pattern of aliens is learnable, though a random element is involved in certain positions in the game.

A terrific shoot-'em-up and a classic blast. Violent escapism at its best■

ARCADE REVIEW



VENOM STRIKES BACK



Crikey. They're back. Just when you thought you'd heard the last of those nasty terrorist-types from VENOM, they've kidnapped Scott Trakker, son of hero Matt, and it's time for MASK to leap into action again.

This is the third MASK game from Gremlin, and the series shows little sign of running out of ideas. Basically, you could take any action game format and stick the name MASK on it, and it's to Gremlin's credit that they haven't taken the opportunity to put out a load of old plop.

Like many recent releases including **Exolon** and **Yeti**, **Venom Strikes Back** takes place over multiple screens through which your beweaponed figure must fight from left to right. In this case the target is a VENOM base on the dark side of the moon, the weapons are various MASK goodies, and the enemies are the guardian monsters and machines of the evil Miles Mayhem.

The background details are nicely designed, while the black backdrop of space means that colour clashes can be kept to a minimum. The figure of Matt Tracker bounds energetically across the screen, leaping over cases, extending bridges and what appears to be water (on the Moon)? The nasty weapons include exploding globes, guided missiles, gun emplacements, giant serpents and little acutely armadillos. So what do you do to fight them off?

Scattered over the landscape you will find packages containing alternative MASK helmets. These give you special powers, and can be selected from an icon menu at the bottom of the screen using the number keys. The first mask fires bullets, but you only have 99 so don't waste them. The others wear out as you use them, so keep an eye on the meters or you'll find your weapon cut off unexpectedly (oo-er). The second mask gives you invulnerability for a short period, while the third allows you to fly and gives you a laser. The fourth is a bit of a mystery, 'cos I haven't found it yet, but expect it'll be something spiffy.

As you'd expect, after moving through several doors, you'll come to the end of the level where there's an extra big, extra nastie waiting to take you out. At the end of level one, it's a cannon mounted on the top of a hill, and here you'll be forced to wade through its fire or waste your flying power in order to get at it.

At the end of each level you're given a code which allows you to start at that level in subsequent games. Quite right too; I loathe games where you have to fight your way all through the first levels over and over again. Apart from the odd silliness – water and clouds on the moon, for instance – **Venom Strikes Back** is jolly good fun. It's remarkably similar to aforementioned titles like **Exolon** and **Yeti**, though, so don't expect much in the way of originality■

FAXBOX

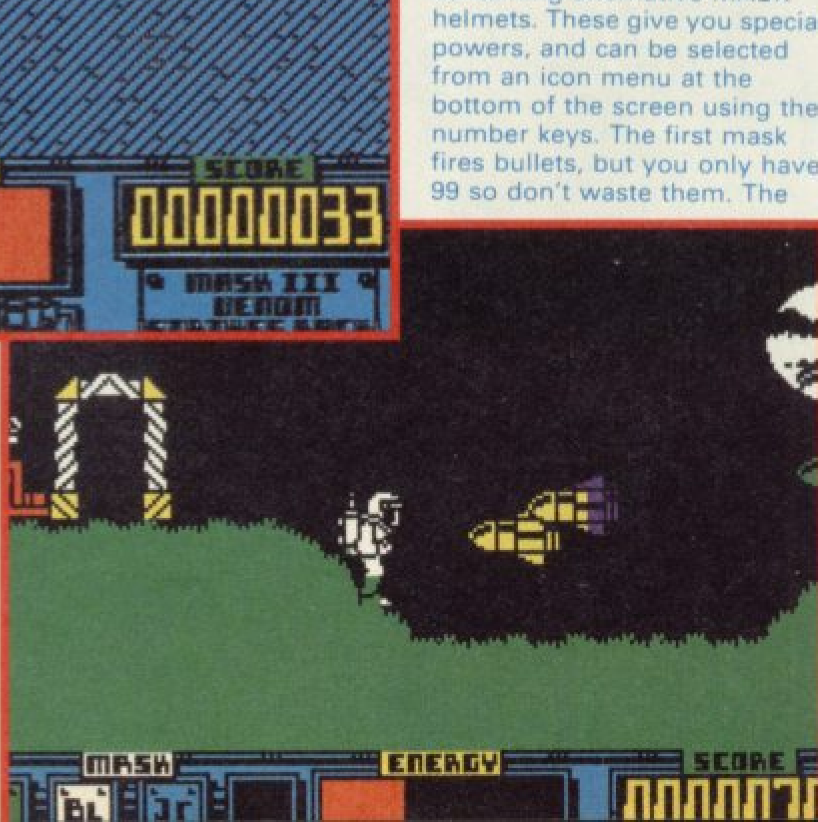
Exciting multi-screen action, ideal for the trigger-happy toy freak

Label: Gremlin Graphics
Author: Mark Rogers & Colin Dooley
Price: £7.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

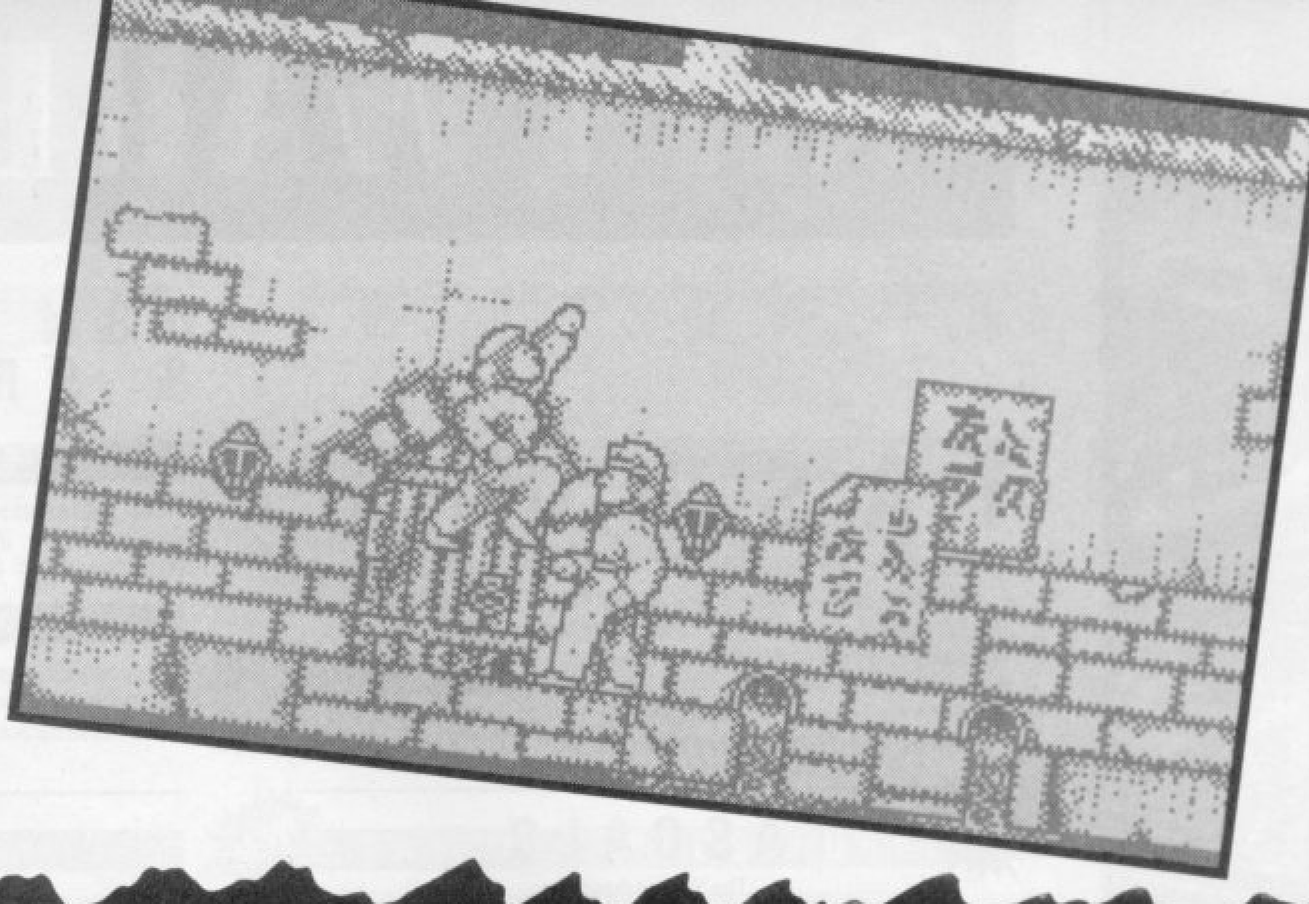
Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆ 7
★★★☆☆





ARCADE REVIEW



HEEEEeeeeeeAAAH! GNNNGH! HUUUuuurnhhhHHHG! No, it's not one of Ian Botham's elephants straining itself, it's yet another karate game in progress. You'd have thought the genre would have been played out long ago, what with the originals like *Way of the Exploding Fist* now reappearing on budget, but Players' latest, *Shanghai Karate*, shows that martial arts games are alive and – kicking (hur hur!).

So what's the plot, I hear you yawning. The evil Wang Chen has

SHANGHAI KARATE

stolen the sacred scrolls from the Karate Masters. While he was at it he slaughtered the lot of them, which I'd have thought would have been more frowned upon, leaving only Lo Yin (who was reading the Daily Star in the bog at the time) to revenge his masters and regain the scrolls.

How does he go about it? Why, by kicking lots of orientals to death. The first level is set in the caves beneath the academy, the second by the Yangtze river, and the third in the Dragon Temple. All the scenes load in one go on the 128K version, which features nicely sampled gongs and various slaps and grunts, together with decent music. On the 48K version you have to load the different levels one at a time.

Some of the backgrounds are lovely, especially the Dragon Temple, but the characters sometimes tend to get lost against the background, especially in the riverside scene. The movement, too, is a bit dodgy; there just aren't enough frames in the animation, so you can't really react to your opponents move until it's too late.

You have the usual selection of fighting moves, including high kicks, punches, low sweeps and blocks. As you chop away at your opponent, he will try to force you to one side of the screen where you will fall (very slowly) to your death. The solution is to leap over his head (again very slowly), turn around and try to force him into the same position.

On the one-player game, you must reduce your opponent's power to zero and bump him off four times to move on the next level. In two-player mode, you just compete on level one, which seems a pity.

So, there you have it. Nice backgrounds, nice sampled noises and music on the 128K version, but rather slow movement (which can be speeded up by selecting sound off) and undistinguished character design.

Whether you fancy a quick kick at *Shanghai Karate* depends very much, I suppose, on whether you've already played and enjoyed *Exploding Fist, Ninja Hamster, Fighting Warrior, Uchi Mata, Barbarian, Sai Combat, Fist 2, Yie-Ar Kung Fu, Kung-Fu Master, Shaolin's Way, International Karate, International Karate Plus, Samurai Warrior,* de dum de dah de dum . . .■

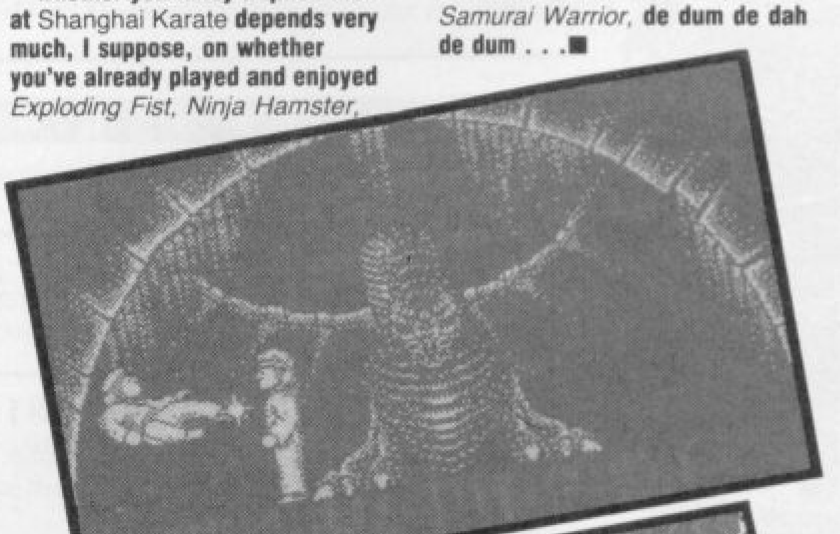
FAXBOX

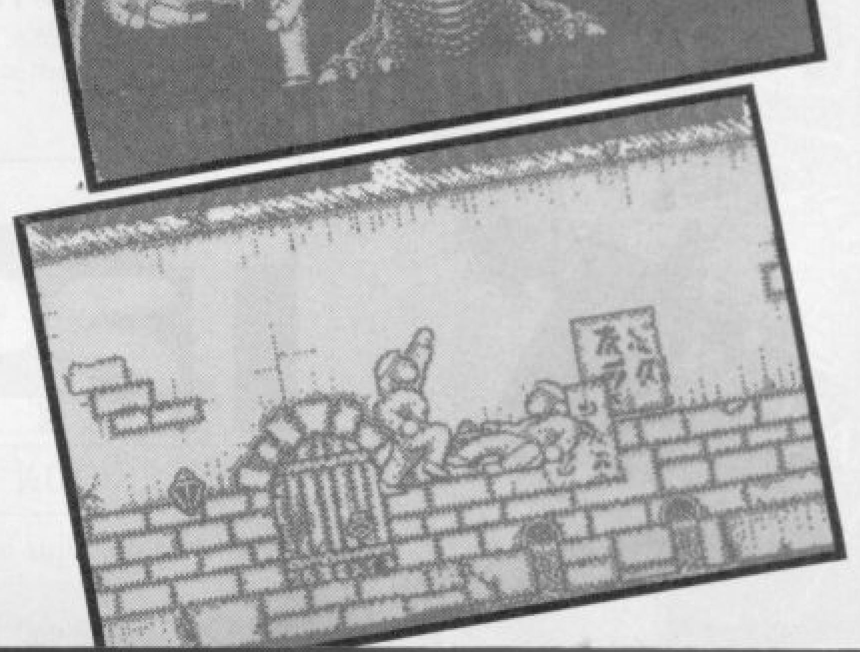
Decent budget chop-'em-up with better back-grounds than gameplay

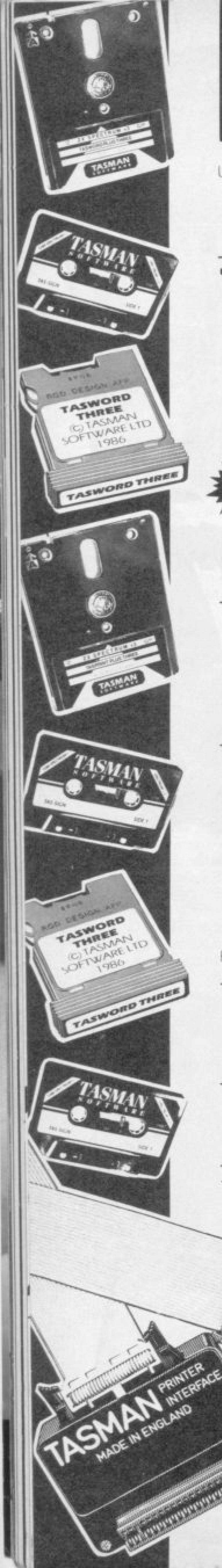
SHANGHAI KARATE
Label: Players
Author: Thomson, Parker, Severn and Swinbourne
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ 7







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PAGE 3 POPSIES

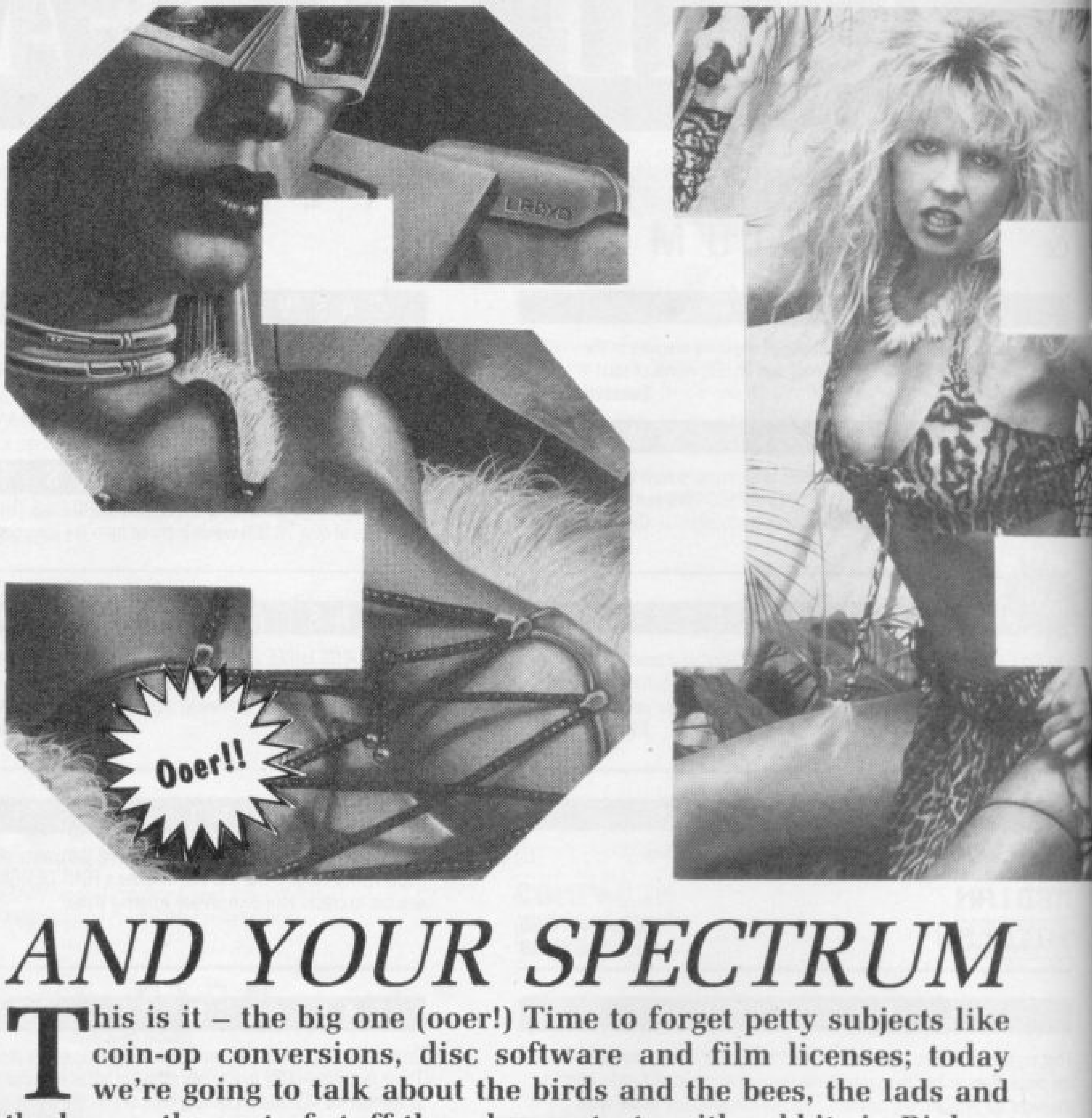
Martech started it with *Samantha Fox Strip Poker.* At the time, Sam was a pouting Page 3 poppet with big things in front of her (I mean the singing career). Unlike Sam, the game didn't flop at all. Thousands of genuine poker fans (honest) queued up to demonstrate their mastery of the venerable card game, and if you believe them not one was saying "phwooer, look at the pixels on that!"

Since then Anco, US Gold and several other unscrupulous companies have produced strip poker games. Palace, though, used real live flesh for the packaging of hack'n'slash hit *Barbarian.* Curvaceous cutie Maria Whittaker was stopped from wobbling long enough to pose in a purple bikini with an embarrassed-looking muscleman. In case you missed the point, the free poster presented her ample assets in bumper blow-up size. Now Martech's *Vixen* presents us with the eyebrow-wiggling sight of Corinne Russell in a leopard-skin bikini and high heels. Where will it all end? SU exclusively predicts

★ *Linda Lusardi in "Whoops! My Clothes Have Fallen Off! (again)"* from Filthogrames. A famous Page 3 Girl has lost all her clothes. You have to find them – and burn them.

★ *Suzanne Mizzi's Mud Wrestling* from Smutronic. Pictures digitised in full colour, mainly brown.

★ *Debee Ashby's Mountaineering,* from Sleazesoft. Negotiate the dangerous south face of Debee Ashby with the help of oxygen equipment and sherpa guides.



AND YOUR SPECTRUM

This is it – the big one (ooer!) Time to forget petty subjects like coin-op conversions, disc software and film licenses; today we're going to talk about the birds and the bees, the lads and the lasses, the sort of stuff they demonstrate with rabbits in Biology "O" Level. So, without even a single "fnarr, fnarr!" (That was one – Ed) **let's explain everything about sex and your micro.**

Are girlies any good at computer games?

No. (This is a complete lie actually)

What does your computer say about your sex life?

Dozens of respected scientists (Prof Jack McMad of the John Noakes Institute of Double Glazing) believe that sexual behaviour is related to the kind of computer you own. He has not been able to work out whether the choice of computer determines the behaviour, or vice versa, but here a few offensive generalisations;

Amiga; "I have more money than sense, so women adore me."

Atari ST; "I have more sense than money, so women ignore me."

Oric; "What exactly do you mean, sex?"

Commodore 64; "Women mean nothing to me – I prefer a good shoot-'em-up."

BBC B; "I would not know a girlie if one came up and bit me on the bum."

IBM PC; "I am not interested in sex, but I do have a fascinating accounts package."

Amstrad; "I am too spotty to even consider sex."

Spectrum; "Can't talk now, I'm too busy ***GETTING DOWN LIKE A SEX MACHINE.***"

So there you have it.

Is size important?

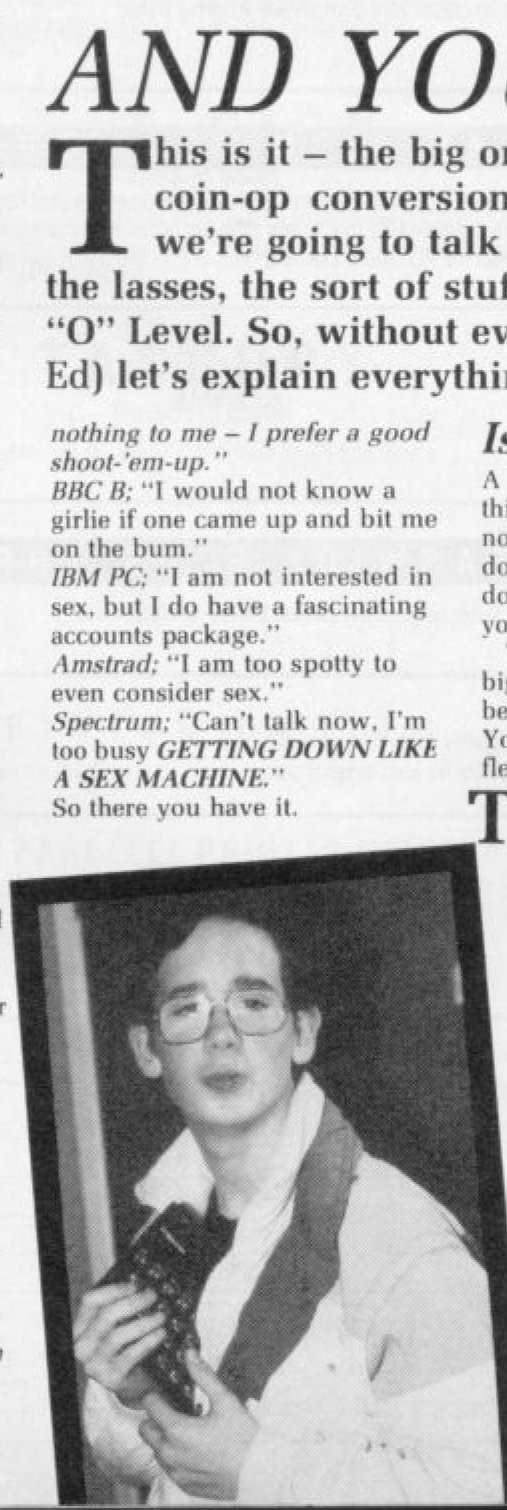
A lot of nonsense is talked about this subject. Some say that it's not what you've got, it what you do with it. Others argue that you don't need a big poker unless you've a hot fire to stoke.

The fact is that if you've got a big one, you can expect to get better results and enjoy it more. You'll also find it's more flexible.

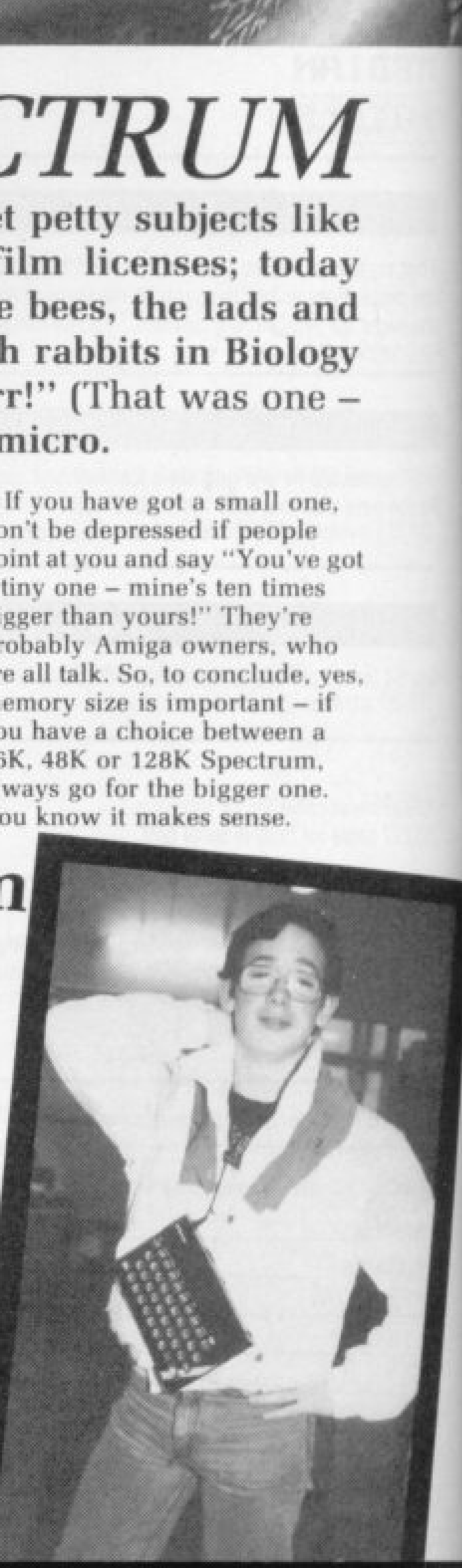
If you have got a small one, don't be depressed if people point at you and say "You've got a tiny one – mine's ten times bigger than yours!" They're probably Amiga owners, who are all talk. So, to conclude, yes, memory size is important – if you have a choice between a 16K, 48K or 128K Spectrum, always go for the bigger one. You know it makes sense.

The Spectrum

Learn to use your Spectrum to get your sexy message across.



A) I have a very varied and adventurous sex life



B) I am a responsible guy and I always carry a rubber (-keyed Spectrum)


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prepare for deadly combat
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Son of the Gods, curse of his fellow men, Hercules is set 12 awesome tasks to exonerate the sin of murdering his children. Armed by his divine fathers he sets forth to face the hideous skeleton hordes and ultimately overcome the evil minotaur. To slay the damned is his only saviour in repenting his sins.
BLOOD BROTHERS
"Our blood is mixed,
We are as one,
Let no man or beast come between us,
And let nothing deter us from our aim,
To avenge the deaths of our parents,
And destroy the Scorpians,
DEATH TO THE SCORPIANS"
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SINCLAIR user
'TARGET; RENEGADE'



Poster No 14 *June*

Lift staples carefully to remove poster!


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Girlies in computer games

This is one of the most baffling aspects of the software industry. If you were to believe certain software houses – no names mentioned, but what do the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean have in common – practically every computer game is full of wigglying, wobbly girlies. The notorious artwork for *Game Over* featured cavernous cleavages, *Where Time Stood Still* has a gleaming-thighed amazon, *Renegade* includes leather-jacketed foxtresses, and *Athena* involves a woman who in real life would barely be able to stand up, let alone fight off hordes of aliens.

But what do you get when you load the game? Nothing. Teeny tiny little characters with no discernible wibbly bits. Wotta ripoff. But there is hope yet. The *Campaign for Real Smut* notes with approval the possibilities of the 16-bit machines with their high res multi-colour graphics, quite capable of portraying mounds of animated flesh.



A Naked Vixen

Take a look at Mirrorsoft's *Defender of the Crown*, the packaging of which features a woman who makes Brigitte Neilsen look like Sue Pollard. Win the game and one of the rewards is an animated scene of a night of passion with this foxy temptress. Even smuttier is *Rocket Ranger*, which includes pervy pix of chesty ladies tied to chairs. Hurrah for Mirrorsoft, striking a blow for real smut!

Girlies in the software industry

Perhaps because they have much more sensible things to do with their time, there are very few female programmers. Honourable exceptions include the enigmatic Anita Sinclair of *Magnetic Scrolls*, who can make grown men swoon with a twitch of her eyebrows, and exotic Hanan Samara of *Dalali Software*. Most of the others just design the pretty bits around the edges. However, there are plenty of women working with software companies. Most of them are GELOs (Girls Employed for Looks Only) whose task is to answer the telephone and say "I'm sorry, he's in a meeting." Ask them anything about computers and they'll say "Ooh, I don't know, you'll have to speak to Mr Grimsdale about that."

There's also another type, invariably called Janice, whose job is to deliver review software too late to get in the current issue, to lose photos, and to send out the wrong competition prizes. Scientists have as yet come up with no explantion of these strange creatures.

How to get girlies with your Spectrum

★ To get into the right romantic mood, program your Spectrum to produce soft lights and sweet music. Here's the listing:

```
10 LET x=0.1: LET y=7
20 BEEP x,y
30 BORDER y: PAPER y: CLS
40 LET y=y: IF y=0 THEN
LET y=7
50 GOTO 20
```

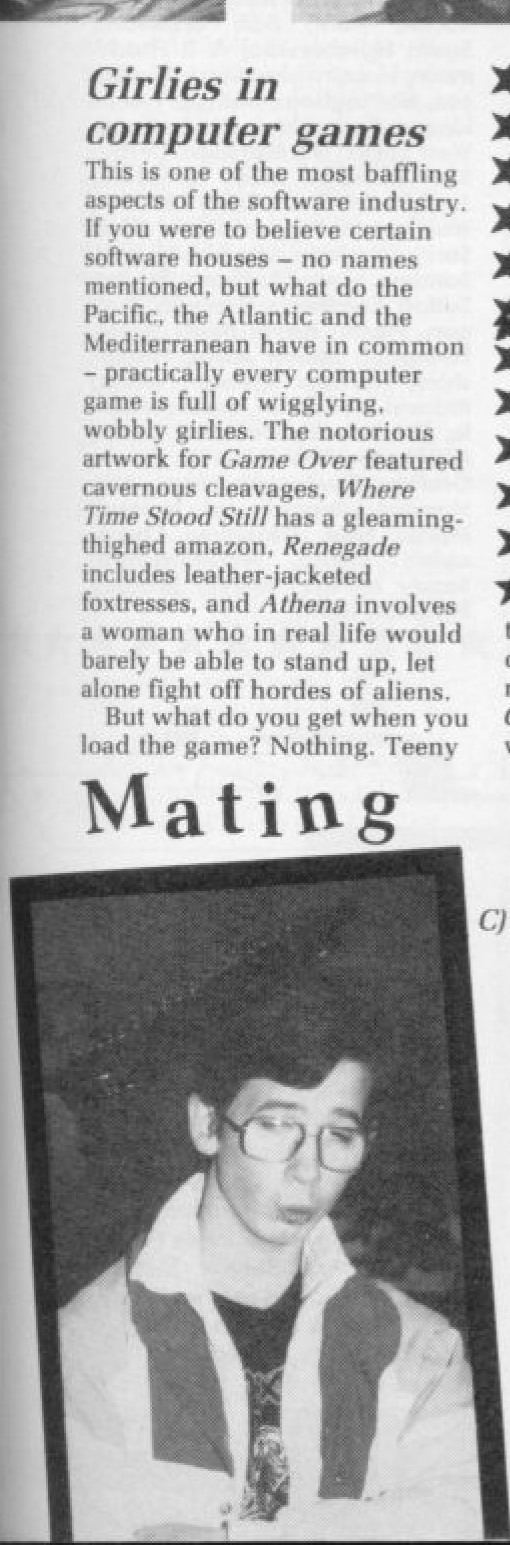
and that should get them purring like Madonna with a new Cadillac.

★Once you have them where you want them, wedge a Spectrum under the door to prevent unwanted interruptions.

★ If the object of your affection is taller than you, you could stand on your Spectrum to improve you chances of getting big snogs. This will not work with Brigitte Neilsen, for whom you would need two IBM PCs, a horsebox and three packing cases.

★ If all else fails, hack into the records of a computer dating agency, alter your statistics to read "6'6", fabulously wealthy, two villas in the South of France", and wait to be smothered.

Mating Dance



C) I am a complete divot



D) I have a very high opinion of myself

SINCLAIR user

COMPETITION WINNERS

PREDATOR

WHO'S GOT THE BIG CHOPPER?

Fans of Arnold Schwarzenegger and his enormous biceps were no doubt delighted to see Activision's *Predator* reviewed and its matching competition in the March issue of the magazine. Radio-controlled helicopter fans must have swooned too, as we announced the amazing, "I Wish I had a Radio Controlled Chopper (Fnar Fnar)" Competition.

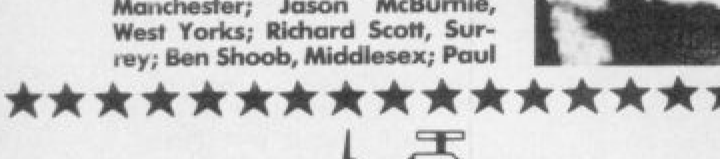
Now, at long last, well a few months later at least, here are the results, and right at the top of the heap, winner of the suitably spiffy helicopter is: Samir Datel, Luton.

You may remember that there were also 25 2nd prize winners, who were to whiz off with a copy of the game apiece, and those 25 people look quite a bit like this: D Grant, Lincoln; Richard Lane, Devon; Ian Lord, Lancs; S Phillips, Ramstein Airbase; Peter Bolton, Wigan; L C Dennett, Hull; Gareth Greatorex, Nottingham; Miss K A Falconer, Herts; Dave Roberts, Cheshire; Joan Buckley, Sheffield; P Simon, South Humberside; Andrew Clarke, Greater Manchester; Jason McBurnie, West Yorks; Richard Scott, Surrey; Ben Shoob, Middlesex; Paul

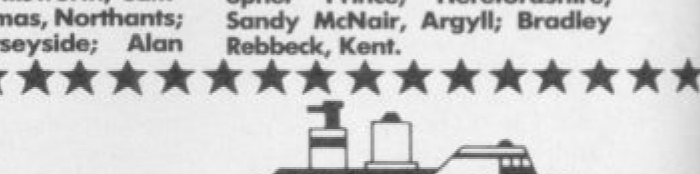


R Harrison, West Lothian; Martin Graham, Glasgow; Michel van Roog, Holland; R Wilkinson, Lancs; Mark Aitkin, Scotland; Colin McBurnie, West Yorkshire; Tom Collins, Clwyd; Andrew Conner, Cheshire; Michael Porter, Lincoln; Chris Philby, Beds.

And (gasp, barf) there were also rumoured to be 50 3rd prize winners who were to get sticky Arnie Schwarzies (ugh) or something akin, and lo and behold if those 50 aren't these people here: Richard Evans, Derbyshire; Kim Shen Ang, Bucks; Pete Symons, Middlesex; Duncan Hart, Lancashire; M Hodges, Croydon; Mark Pillsworth, Cambridge; Jason Lomas, Northants; D Sejrup, Merseyside; Alan Jeanes, Dorset; M P Lawrence, Warwickshire; Gordon Robinson, Powys; K Hardy, Shropshire; Simon Tomlinson, Wilts; David Torrence, Nr Derby; David Ure, Fife; David John Burke, Manchester; Jamie Reekie, Scotland; Ewan Duncan, Lancs; Peter Dobson, Staffs; Joseph Simmonds, West Midlands; Ian Needham, Bromley; Michelle Conetto, Hertfordshire; Geraint Micael, Kent; Bob Crawford, South Humberside; A R Hutchinson, Lincolnshire; Mark Nicholson, Nottingham; Michael Tompkinson, Derbyshire; Gavin Quail, West Yorks; G S Marsden, Derby; Karl Barrow, West Yorkshire; Jonathan Chilton, Kent; J Bruton, Warrington; Edward Petts, Kent; Stevie Nicolaou, London; Miss F L Sanders, Herts; Anthony Taylor, Sutton Coldfield; Graham Burgon, Hants; Kevin Mark Bates, Liverpool; Simon Ashe, Hampshire; Horness Spencer, Worcs; Richard D Pearson, Essex; M Lisle, Gwynnedd; Kendeas Costis, Middlesex; Steve Harrop, Hants; Graham Bowen, Hereford; Jem Howard, Republic of Ireland; Martin Friel, Glasgow; Christopher Prince, Herefordshire; Sandy McNair, Argyll; Bradley Rebbeck, Kent.

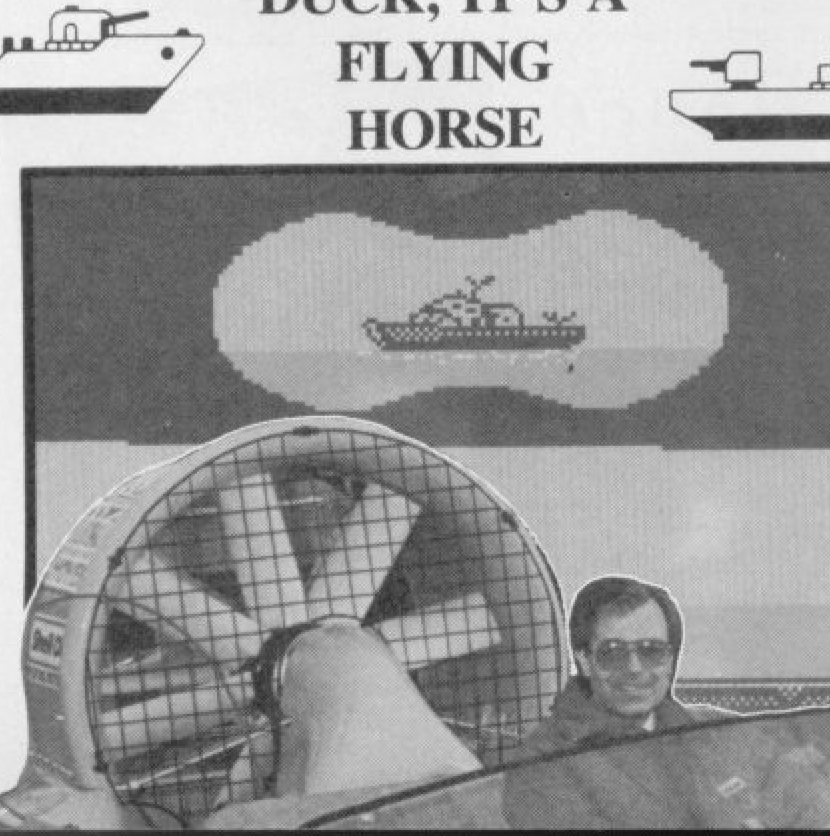


DUCK, IT'S A FLYING HORSE



Also in March, strangely enough, we asked if you'd like to have a whizz around in a hovercraft. At least four or five of our readers weren't entirely indifferent to that suggestion, and the entries flooded in by the sackful. The lucky chap who'll get to mash hundreds of people under a large windbag will be: Stuart James Eadon, Northants.

Electronic Arts, cuddly as they are, also pledged 25 copies of the game and 25 posters, so 25 people (appropriately enough, I feel) will get to play ***PHM Pegasus*** *to celebrate the fact that it's not them in the hovercraft. They are these people here: Robert Goldie, 16 Sig Regt; David Haffner, Worcs; Alan Will, Aberdeenshire; Paul Roberts, Clwyd; Charli Drew, Hants; D Lomas, Staffs; Mike Drane, Kent, Karl Donovan, Berkshire; Matthew Combey, Leicester; Daniel Preistwood, West Sussex; K Goodwin, Lancs; Stephen Crocker, Broadtown; Hywel Thomas, Wiltshire; David Burke, Manchester; Glenn Foster, Blackpool; N Smith, Kent; Matthew Holden, Cumbria; David Ravenhill, Wolverhampton; Paul Cattermole, Surrey; Kevin Gentry, Essex; Graham Burgon, Hants; Darren Buddle, Kent; Scott Sully, County Durham; Matthew Redford, Notts; Christopher Burgess, S Yorks.*



COMPETITION

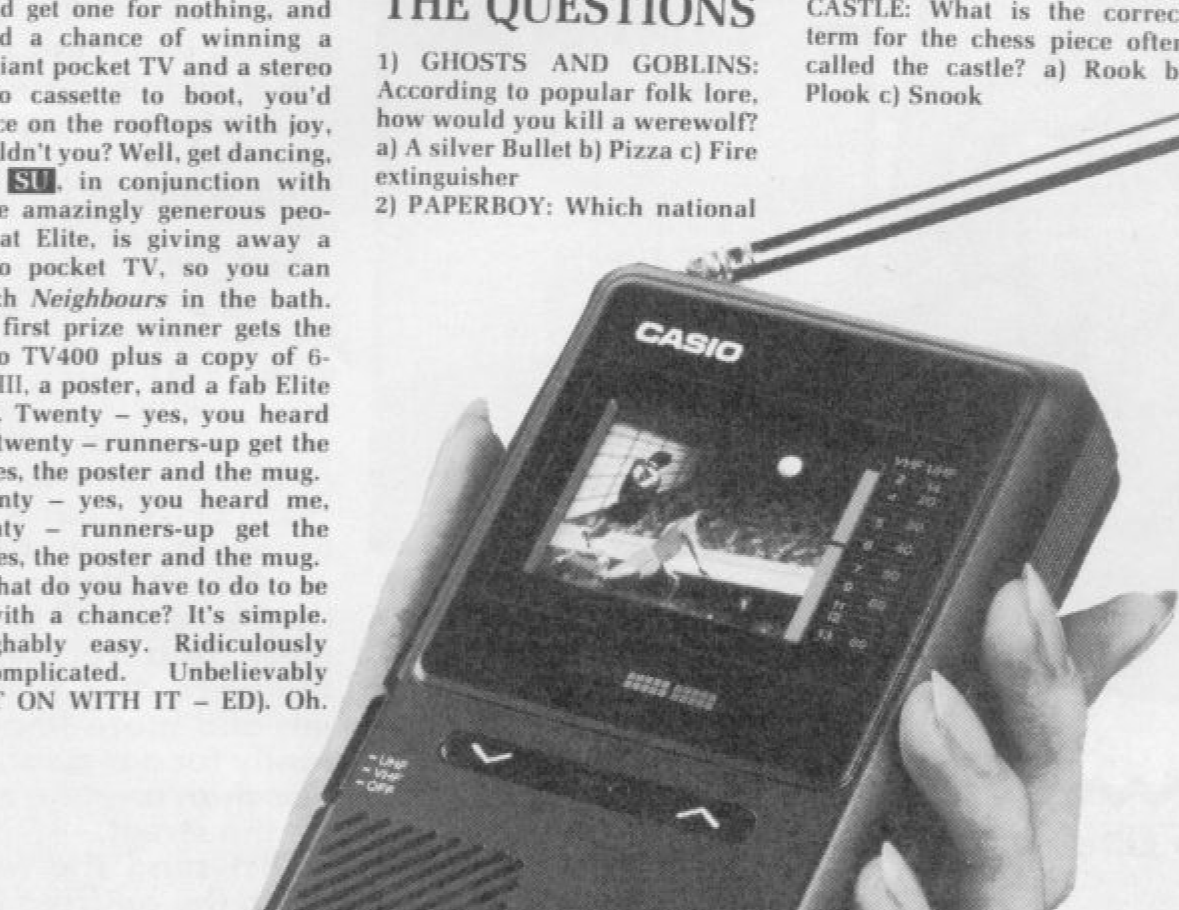
FAB SIX PACK III COMPO!

You know a bargain when you see one, don't you? So you know that Elite's 6-Pak III, featuring six smash-hit games collected together for £9.95, is bonzer value for money, don't you? So if you could get one for nothing, and stand a chance of winning a brilliant pocket TV and a stereo radio cassette to boot, you'd dance on the rooftops with joy, wouldn't you? Well, get dancing, 'cos SU, in conjunction with those amazingly generous people at Elite, is giving away a Casio pocket TV, so you can watch *Neighbours* in the bath. The first prize winner gets the Casio TV400 plus a copy of 6-Pak III, a poster, and a fab Elite mug. Twenty – yes, you heard me, twenty – runners-up get the games, the poster and the mug. Twenty – yes, you heard me, twenty – runners-up get the games, the poster and the mug.

What do you have to do to be in with a chance? It's simple. Laughably easy. Ridiculously uncomplicated. Unbelievably (GET ON WITH IT – ED). Oh. Right. Just answer these questions based on the six games in the compilation.

THE QUESTIONS

1) GHOSTS AND GOBLINS: According to popular folk lore, how would you kill a werewolf? a) A silver Bullet b) Pizza c) Fire extinguisher
2) PAPERBOY: Which national newspaper does Paperboy deliver? a) The Independent b) The Sun, c) Pig Breeding Today
3) ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE: What is the correct term for the chess piece often called the castle? a) Rook b) Plook c) Snook
4) LIVING DAYLIGHTS: In the Bond movies, who was M's secretary? a) Miss Wobblythighs b) Miss Moneypenny c) Miss Aligned



5) ENDURO RACER: What is the minimum age for riding a motorbike? a) 4 b) 53 c) 16
6)DRAGON'S LAIR: Who was the legendary British dragon-slayer? a) Boy George b) George Melly c) Saint George

A doddle, yes?

Scribble the letters for each correct answer on the coupon, add your name and address, and whizz it off to, "I want square eyes and numb ears competition", Sinclair User Compo Mega Centre, 14 Holkham Road, Peterborough PE2 0UF. Closing date is June 30th and in due course we'll drag ourselves from our scented couches of luxury and get around to picking some winners.

PRIZES

1st PRIZE – A fabulous Casio pocket television, PLUS a stereo radio cassette machine, PLUS a copy of 6-Pak III, a poster, and an Elite mug

20 Runners-up prizes: A copy of 6-Pak III, a poster and an Elite mug.

NAME.......................................
ADDRESS.......................................
....

ANSWERS (tick one)

1 a............... b............... c...............
2 a............... b............... c...............
3 a............... b............... c...............
4 a............... b............... c...............
5 a............... b............... c...............
6 a............... b............... c...............

EURO JOYSTICK OFFER

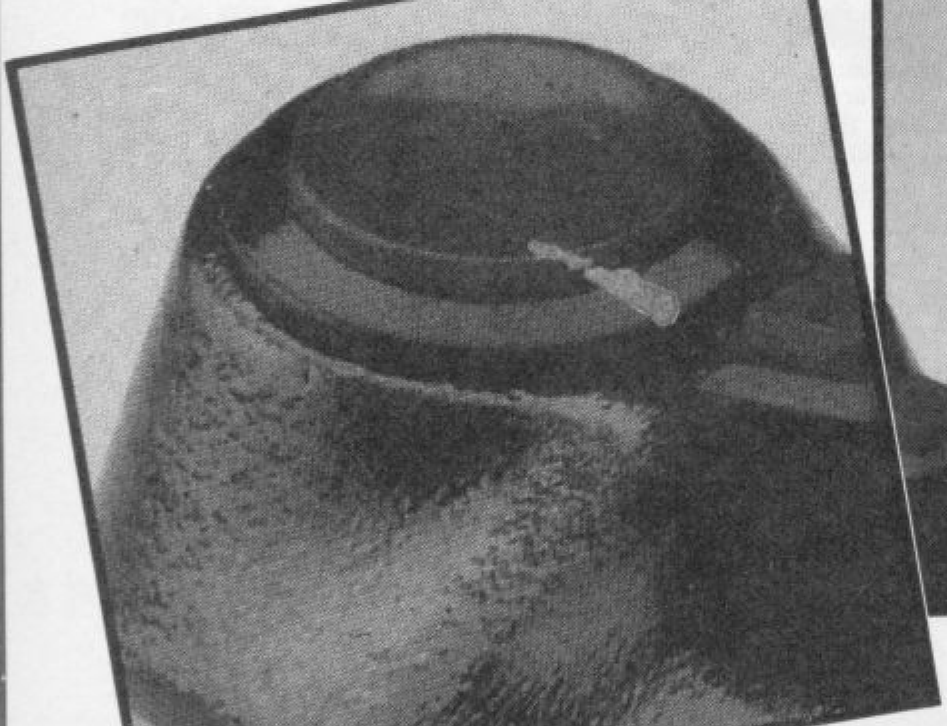


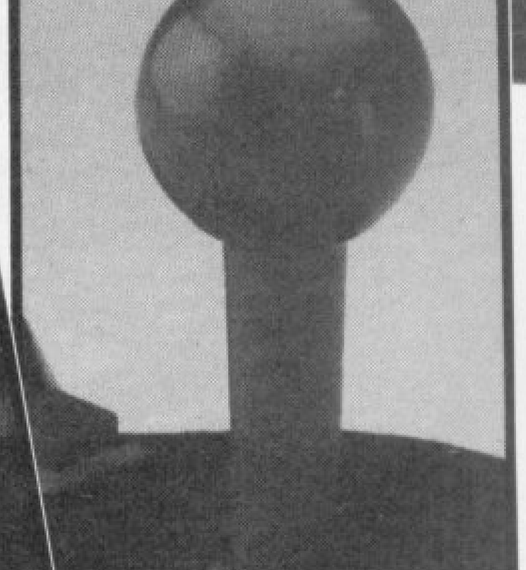
Look at it. Flaming sexy, don't you agree? What is it? A recently discovered sculpture constructed by Picasso in his spare time? No. The latest in ultra-fine space technology from NASA? Closer, but still wrong. An exotic Oriental ornament? Wrong, wrong, wrong.

The mysteriously enthralling object pictured here is none other than a special edition of Euromax's top-selling Elite (fnar) Micro-Swtich Joystick!!!

Why is it a special edition? Because a limited number of the little wonders have been made by Euromax in celebration of the fact that they've done so fabulously in their normal colours. Our special whizzo ones will be a fab mixture of Blue and Yellow – just the combination for the utmost in alien-blasting chic.

Our top team (Tony Dillon his friend and the lady from the newspaper shop) have tested the Elite over a prolonged games-playing stint and come to the conclusion that it is "Wicked". It's an elegant piece of engineering. No stonking great sticky pads that no-one uses on the bottom to get in the way. A single non-qutofire firebutton (so as not to interfere with games on the market which get all confused at the merest hint of an autofire option). And it's all ergonomically designed, so you can hold it in your mitts without worrying about it slipping out of your grip the moment you relax from a white-knuckle situation.





And why are we raving on about this fabbo piece of engineering? We'll tell you why (Thank goodness – a million readers). Normally it costs £11.95 but in a fizzaway super Special Offer YOU can get hold of one of these times for a fraction of the price of a jumbo jet, and more importantly for a big, fat, £2 less than anyone else on the street.

Just send the form off to the address below, along with your cheque/postal order made payable to Euromax Electronics for £9.95 and within 28 days one of the little blighters will be trying to force its way through your letterbox.

Please send me a fabbo Elite Special Edition Joystick!

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

Send coupon and cheque to:
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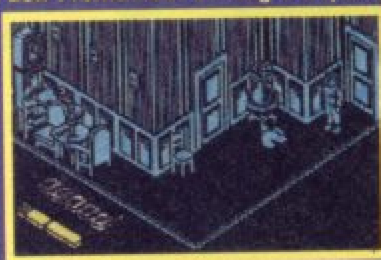
TWILIGHT

ALL STARS

ARCADE Label: **The Edge** Author: **In House** Price: **£8.99** Memory: **48/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Good selection of titles ranging from the average to the excellent. A wise choice for purchase.

The Edge have set themselves quite a reputation for quality games and it really shows in their latest release. Games ranging as far back as Starbike and Psytraxx are featured, right up to the minute titles like Inside Outing. A full rundown, from Tape 1, Side 1, Bobby Bearing. The first isometric ballgame to feature CurviSpace. Starring a ball trying to rescue some more balls. Phnarr phnarr indeed. Brian Bloodaxe. Viking warrior set in the 20th century in this platforms and ladders escapade with more than a hint of Monty Pythonness about it. That's the Spirit. *Ghostbusters* all over again. Starbike. Jetman comes back to life on a moped. Psytraxx. The very first game to feature over 1,000 screens, all exactly the same. Xecutor. SU classic colourful blasting action and one of the all time greats. Shadow Skimmer. Technicolour Uridum, basically. Mindstone. More icon drivel, whoops, driven adventure fun. Inside Outing The only isometric exploring game ever to make Graham "Butch" Taylor cry with frustration as he was savaged by a canary, again. Warlock. Another 3D isometric jobby, except that this time, you play the baddie. I don't remember writing the quote on the back of the box, though. I wonder where they got it from. Competent compilation that just oozes quality with a capital SU. If you have a spare £9 note in your pocket, I think I could safely recommend you to pick this up■



★★★★☆ 8

FREEDOM FIGHTER

ARCADE Label: **Powerhouse** Authors: **Jon Paul Eldridge** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **Plus 3** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

Dismal shoot-'em-up hardly enlivened by sampled speech

Freedom Fighter is a dead standard Galaxians-type space shoot-'em-up, which makes one wonder why the illustration shows MIG 21s bombing Moscow. Your spaceship sits at the bottom of the screen, shooting down dancing aliens, avoiding bombs, and catching concussion weapons which will otherwise kill you when they reach the bottom of the screen.

At the end of each wave you'll face a fast-moving, bomb dropping mothership. The movements of the aliens are jerky, the collision detection is very suspect, and the sampled speech is probably the worst I've ever heard; "Get ready" sounds like "Geck Eddie", so I kept looking for this Eddie character so I could "geck" him.

If as much attention had been put into the game as had been applied to producing the digitised portrait of the programmer on the loading screen – it would STILL have been plop. Avoid like eczema■



★☆☆☆☆ 1

DAMBUSTERS

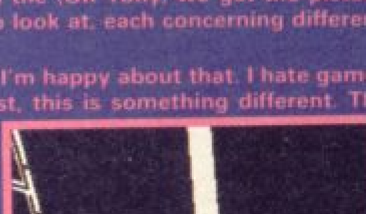
ARCADE Label: **Power House** Author: **Sydney Development Corporation** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Poorly thought about re-release of a trashy licence. A clanger has been dropped

Don't get me wrong. By all accounts The Dambusters was a very good film, it's just that I don't think it's the perfect choice of film to licence.

In Dambusters, the game, you play the pilot in that historical bombing run with the infamous bouncing bomb. And the front gunner. And the rear gunner. And the navigator. And the (OK Tony, we get the picture GT). You have a variety of screens to look at, each concerning different parts of the plane.

The game is hard, I'm glad to say. I'm happy about that. I hate games that are walkovers, but to be honest, this is something different. The screens have warning systems, so you do know when to look at them, but they do have a tendency to all go off at the same time. Frustrating, but true. Add to that the poor sound and the lame playability, DB doesn't add up to much■



★★☆☆☆ 4

ZONE



BEYOND THE IC



Why is it that girlie heroines have suddenly become popular? Could it be that the success of games like Barbarian, Vixen, Athena and Game Over has given everyone the idea that acres of female flesh on the artwork helps a game to sell? Beats me. Still, Beyond the Ice Palace is good enough to succeed even if the hero was a fat, spotty male dwarf.

Far to the north, goes the blurb, lies a land of mystery and enchantment, a land of magic, of goblins and dragons, where the forces of good and evil struggle endlessly for supremacy. They must mean Walsall, home of Elite, though I've never thought of it as a stronghold of magical adventure.

Due to some shift in the



cosmic balance – mortgage rates going up, or something – the forces of evil have gone bonkers, burning the magic forests and forcing the peaceful woodcutters to flee. The spirits of the forest have put their heads together and come up with a magic arrow which has the ability to summon a guardian spirit. They shoot the arrow into the air, and guess who finds it – yes, muggins, it's you.

Set in the endless caverns of pixie evil, Beyond the Ice Palace revolves around the shapely heroine (as far as a 16x32 pixel sprite can be shapely) seeking

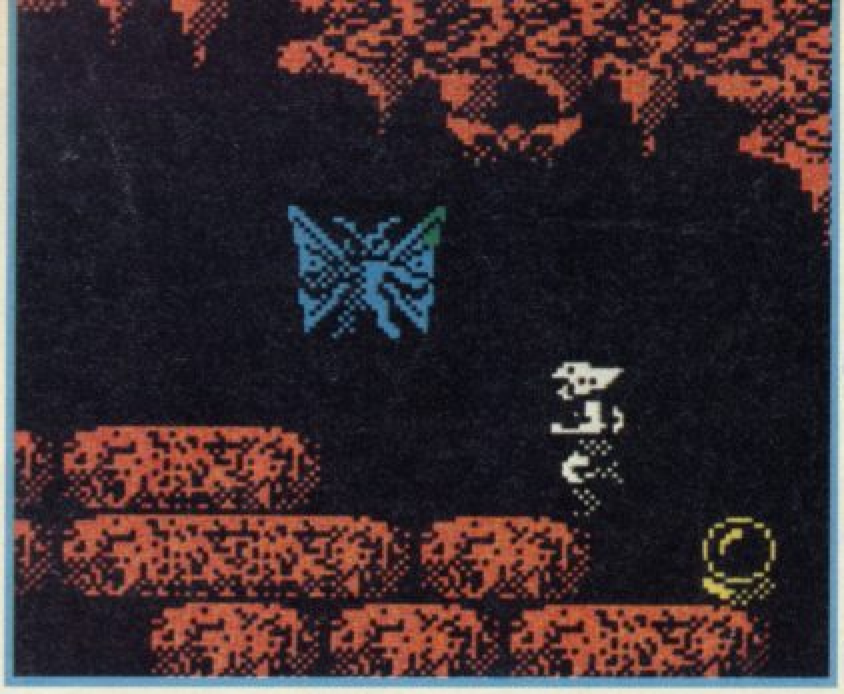
FAXBOX

Enjoyable though unoriginal arcade adventure romp.

BEYOND THE ICE PALACE
Label: Elite
Author: Paradise Software
Price: £8.95
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆ 7



ICE PALACE



out the globes of power which will overcome the forces of nastiness . . . you get the idea. You can leap, duck, climb ladders, and fire three types of weapon. The knife has a long range, but isn't very powerful and only travels along the ground. The sword is similar but more powerful, while the mace whirls through the air (so it's better for knocking off airborne ghoulies). You can pick up your choice of weapon at the start before plunging into the cavers, and you'll find extra weapons along the way.

Although you start with nine lives, you'll soon lose a few as you're attacked by brain-eating bats, axe-throwing ratmen, vampire moths and scuttling trolls. If you get in a really sticky corner, you can call up your secret weapon, the guardian spirit. This dopey-looking moon-faced weeble shoots around the screen, wiping it clean of your enemies. You start off with two spirits, and can pick up extra ones along the way, in order to keep you spirits up (joke!!!).

The animation is pretty nice, although when some of the flying monsters move across the backgrounds there's a fair amount of colour clash (Ugh). Sound? It's OK. Gameplay? Fair enough. Lots of blasting through mounds of rubble, leaning across moving platforms, climbing ladders, and shooty shooty shooty at the nasties. Music? The usual impeccable David Whittaker performance. Not a classic in any sense, but certainly good enough to occupy you until the NBT (Next Big Thing) comes along■



TWILIGHT ZONE

DATA EAST'S ARCADE ALLEY

ARCADE Label: **US Gold** Author: **Various** Price: **£6.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

An arcadester's nightmare. 4 no hope conversions, and one that doesn't really make you sweat with excitement

There have been some really good arcade conversions around. Even from the early days of the Spectrum. Take your Space Invaders, for example, or your Pacman. They were classics. The recent ones have been quite acceptable too. Karnov and Rastan to name but two. But as with any branch of the software tree, there are the turkeys.

Kung Fu Master is, quite frankly, terrible. The scrolling is slow and jerky, the graphics are poorly animated and the playability level is into minus figures. Express Raider is worse, if that is possible. Breakthru is crud, pure and simple. The idea of driving an oversized dune buggy through lots of different areas may be a good one, but when the game has been put together as badly as this one, the idea comes to nothing. Finally, Last Mission. Probably, the saving grace of the tape, this 360 scroller over a multitude of levels is actually quite good in places, but unfortunately lacks the 'ooomph' to pick up the compilation. Surprisingly, a duff from US Gold. See me after school, Master Tidsall, and I don't want to see it (or the moustache) happen again■



★★☆☆☆ ★★☆☆☆ **4**

6-PAK VOL 3

ARCADE Label: **Elite** Author: **various** Price: **£9.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

Excellent selection of blasts from the past with one obligatory stinker

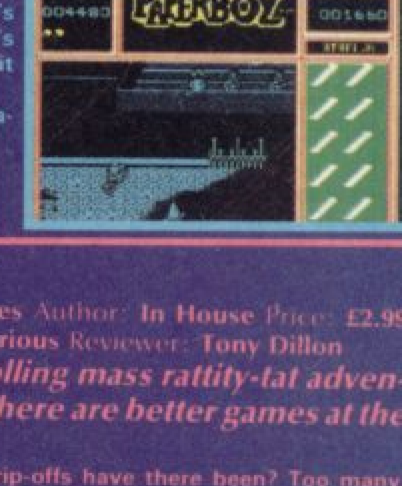
Despite the fact that not all these titles were originally released by Elite, this is a fine selection of some of last year's biggest hits.

Paperboy is the chart-topping coin-op conversion in which you avoid obstacles while bicycling along your delivery route. Dragon's Lair and Escape From Singe's Castle both make a fair attempt to reproduce the thrills of the laser-disc coin-ops, while Ghosts and Goblins is the classic fight-the-ghoulies, leap-over-the-chasms game.

Enduro Racer is Activision's graphically impressive motorbike race, like the others a coin-op conversion.

The turkey is Domark's The Living Daylights, based on the James Bond film and featuring all the playability of a soggy Weetabix. Why this one's on here is anyone's guess, since it's not by Elite, it wasn't much of a hit and it isn't a coin-op conversion.

Otherwise, a worthwhile compilation.



★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ **8**

FRONTLINE

ARCADE Label: **Zeppelin Games** Author: **In House** Price: **£2.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Above average multi-scrolling mass rattity-tat adventure. Fine for 3 quid, but there are better games at the price

How many bad Commando rip-offs have there been? Too many. You only have to mention games like Who Dares Wins 2 to see the average man in the street cringe. Then again, on the other hand, the left one, how many good Commando rip-offs have there been? Not enough. Frontline is one that fits into the latter category, thankfully.

Well, this kind of game can be a little tedious, especially if the action isn't exactly boiling hot. The action in FL doesn't hit you very fast or in great lumps, but it is there to be found. The graphics aren't too wonderful either, as your main character looks like something that one of those men with funny balloons has made. The areas themselves are quite well laid out, though in places it can be a little hard to make out what some objects are. The sound is practically nonexistent, just a blip and blop here and there. It plays slightly better than most budget efforts, but not much. OK at the price, but I can't see anyone being really hooked for long■



★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ **7**

ARCADE ★ REVIEW



Ah, the good ol' days. We had real men then, you know. We had real excitement. We had real Air Rallies. Ah yes, I remember them well. I remember the greatest one of all, the GB. Yes, I remember that. That was where I met your mother, right after I won. Now, there's a game that's ripe for conversion. (Tony, what is this twaddle? Is the pressure getting to you or what? – GT).



GEE BEE AIR RALLY





A great voice booms across the desolate plain. "Do not worry, Old Man. I have heard your prayers and they have been answered." No, it's not the voice of our publisher known to



all as 'God', it is the voice of Activision, the fabbo software house that has seen the light and sensibly decided to convert **GB Air Rally** from the Amiga, to the Spectrum. Surprisingly it's made a very good conversion.

GBAR is a race game, or rather, a series of races. 15 in all, plus 5 special events. You are given a limited amount of time to complete each course in your small light aircraft. Other contestants fly in your way, and you have to fly over, under or around them without going outside the markers that mark the course. If you go off course, ie outside the barriers, time accelerates to four times the normal time and, well, you take less time this time to do twice as much as you did last time. You see.

FAXBOX

Race for the sky in one of the straightest conversions from a 16 bit machine I've seen yet on the Spectrum

GEE BEE AIR RALLY
Label: Activision
Author: Steve Cartwright
Price: £9.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ 8

The illusion of movement has been well realised, the ground effect being composed of horizontal strips of light and dark colour. These are scrolled towards the bottom of the screen and widened to give the effect of coming close to the screen. The sprites, few that they are, are also enlarged to give the same illusion and it works remarkably well.

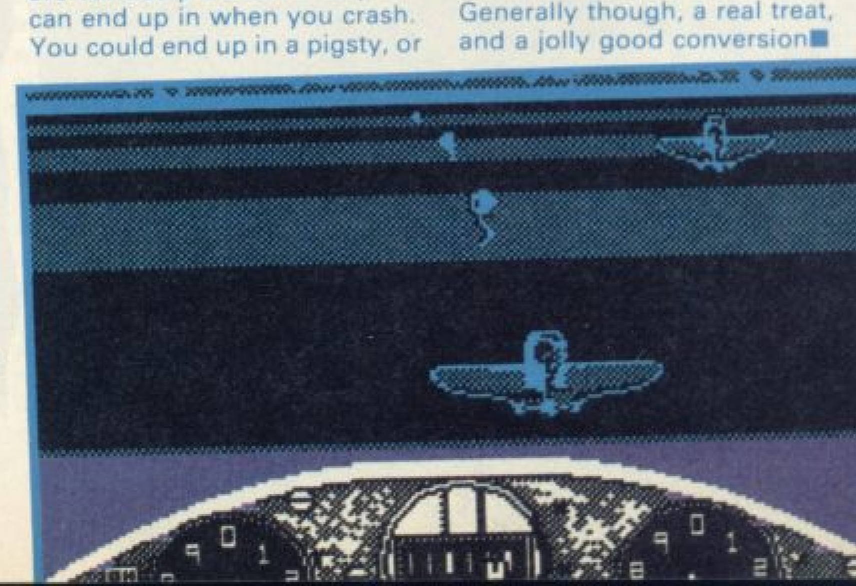
Your plane is very large, fully 8 character blocks wide, and handles very well. It slips realistically when cornering, and it slows and accelerates, as would be expected, when going up and down.

The special events give a welcome break from the hectic races. There are 2 types of special event, and they are balloon popping and the slalom. In the balloon popping, you have to burst a set number of balloons within the time limit to qualify, though you have to be careful. Hidden amongst the scores of balloons are telegraph poles. Hit these too many times and you will stall, and get to see one of the game's many pictures.

These are a real treat. There are various predicaments you can end up in when you crash. You could end up in a pigsty, or out in the desert. You could find yourself hanging from a tree or, if you're lucky, you'll find yourself looking up between a young lady's legs. (Dillon! Don't be repulsive – TH).

The other special event is the slalom. Fly on the outside of the set number of markers to complete the course. This is not very easy. Fly on the wrong side of a marker and you lose a lot of time. Very nasty.

Do I have any gripes? Only one. The game is multi-load. A great shame, and as far as I can tell, a waste of time. There is no great difference between each load, but still, I suppose Activision had their reasons. Generally though, a real treat, and a jolly good conversion■



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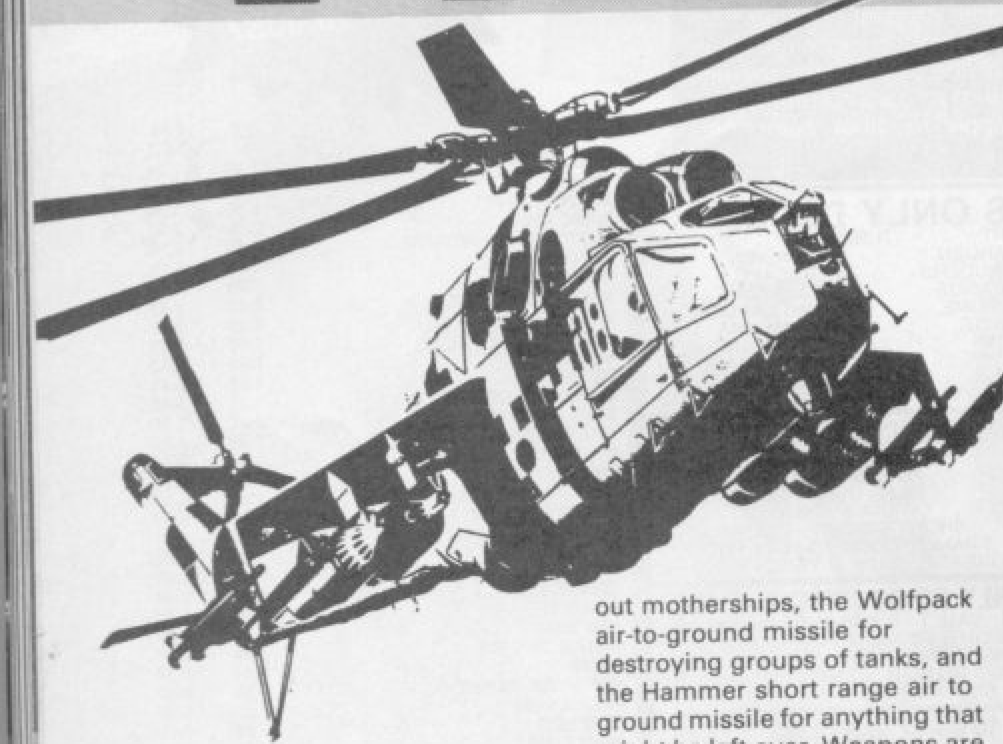
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PROWLER



Prowler is probably the best futuristic helicopter simulations/shoot-'em-up budget game you'll see, oooh, this afternoon. It's a good combination of depth and straightforward shooty fun.

The time; the future. About 4.30. Nasty aliens have invaded absolutely everywhere, and your task is to defend your planet using a heavily-armed helicopter. Your out-of-cockpit view shows the (oddly featureless) background scrolling by happily as you zip about your mission.

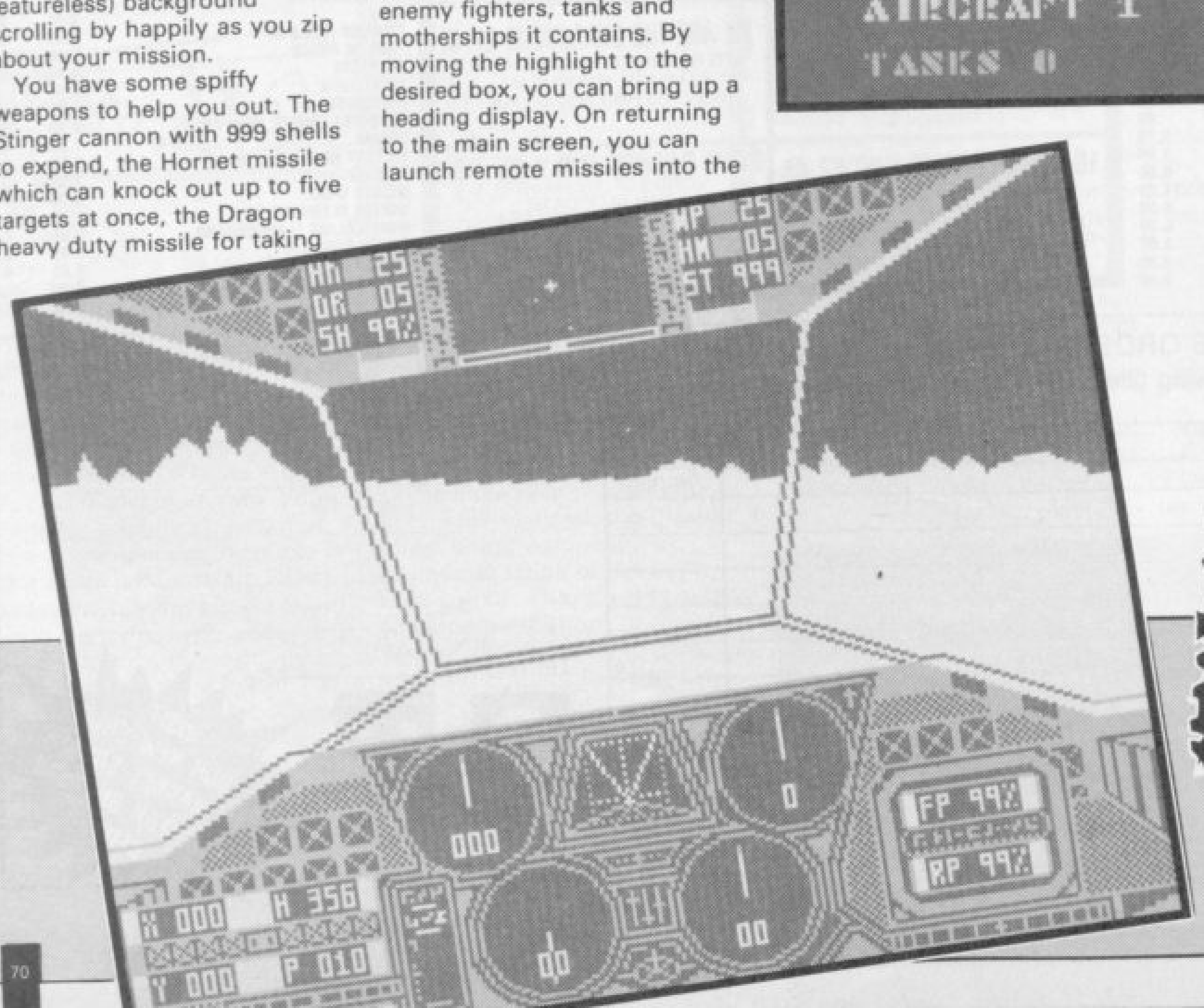
You have some spiffy weapons to help you out. The Stinger cannon with 999 shells to expend, the Hornet missile which can knock out up to five targets at once, the Dragon heavy duty missile for taking out motherships, the Wolfpack air-to-ground missile for destroying groups of tanks, and the Hammer short range air to ground missile for anything that might be left over. Weapons are selected with appropriate keys, and the instrument display tells you which is currently armed. Instruments also give you readouts for altitude, vertical velocity, ground speed, co-ordinates, heading and power.

A targeting computer allows you to select the nearest baddie to home in on, while key F switches on your tactical display. This divides the planet into a grid, each box of which is marked with the number of enemy fighters, tanks and motherships it contains. By moving the highlight to the desired box, you can bring up a heading display. On returning to the main screen, you can launch remote missiles into the sector, or head towards it and engage in close combat.

One of the best features of the game is the radar display. This can be zoomed in and out using the space bar and CAPS SHIFT key, so you can use it to locate concentrations of enemy ships at a distance, then step up the magnification to engage when you see the whites of their eyes.

There are several skill levels and six types of mission to choose from. Some of the missions are training flights which allow you to master the controls without getting killed (although you can still crash the ship). Others are horrendously difficult, with every sector crammed with enemies. An updated version of the sort of **Star Trek** or **Codename MAT** prototype, **Prowler** is excellent value for money. A pity, then, that the instructions are full of mistakes – command keys duplicated, references to mysterious "function keys" on the Spectrum, a Help page which refuses to appear – and it seems quite possible to spend ages chasing down targets without coming into contact with so much as a stray Hoover. Still, worth checkin' out■





FAXBOX

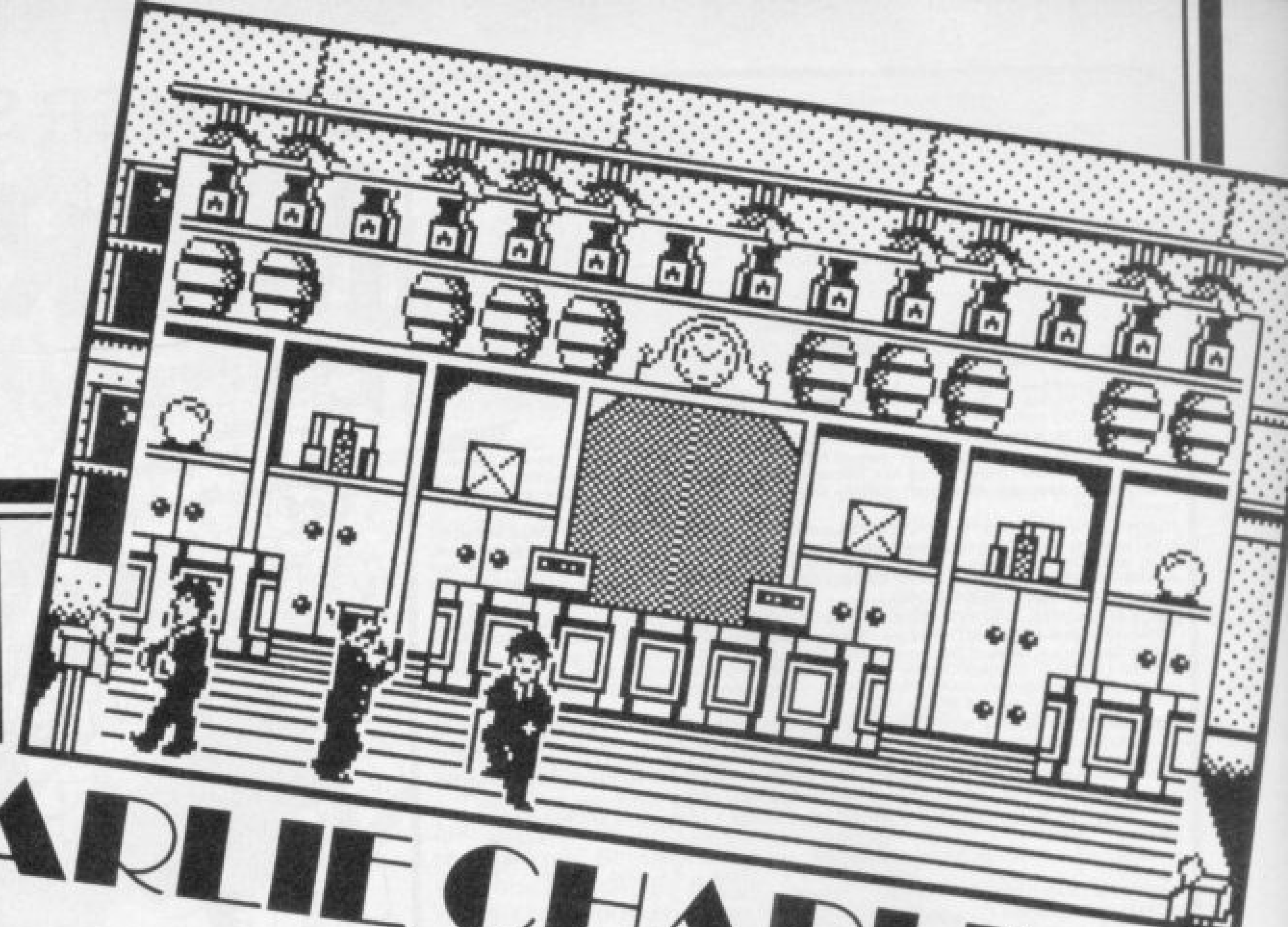
Sophisticated budget hybrid of helicopter sim and shoot-'em-up

PROWLER
Label: Mastertronic
Author: Icon Design
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ 7

STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW





CHARLIE CHAPLIN

As part of the recent trend for digging up dead comedians and turning them into computer games (*Laurel & Hardy, 3 Stooges . . .*), US Gold has made a brave attempt to digitise the little tramp aka **Charlie Chaplin**. It could have been brilliant, it could have been a disaster, it turned out to be both.

All you have to do is make a funny movie. Simple, huh? Your first task is to choose a script. Using the joystick, you step through a menu of titles, each one of which is accompanied by a brief description of the number of scenes, actors and props, plus the cost of the shoot. Obviously, you can only choose a script which is within your budget, and the aim is to make enough money from each film to finance a bigger and better one.

Once you've selected a script, choose a scene to shoot and you'll move to the main action.

The beautifully-detailed displays of the film sets are in glorious black and white, so one thing the game doesn't suffer from is attribute clash. I suppose they could also have justified dropping the sound effects (silent movie, see?) but there is the odd bleep and bloop.



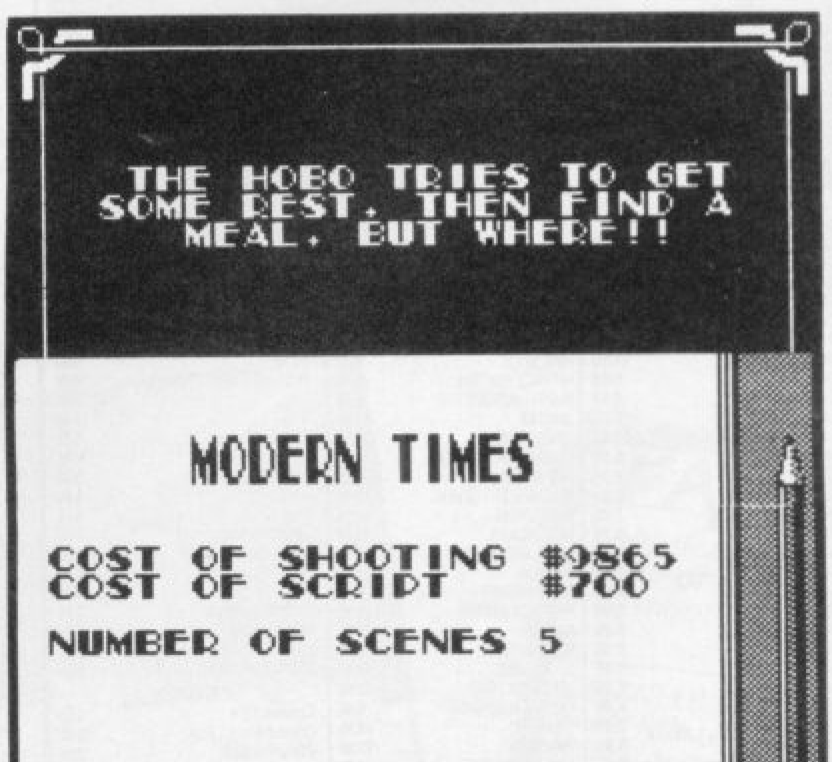
Now, the big problem with the game is that all you are told to do in the instructions is "move Charlie around the set doing whacky stunts." The little waddling figure of Charlie and the other actors are nicely designed and animated, but could I make them do anything funny? No, kiddies, I couldn't. Wiggle the joystick and press the fire button, and if you're lucky someone will fall over of get a smack on the nose, but this is hardly the stuff of which comedy classics are made.

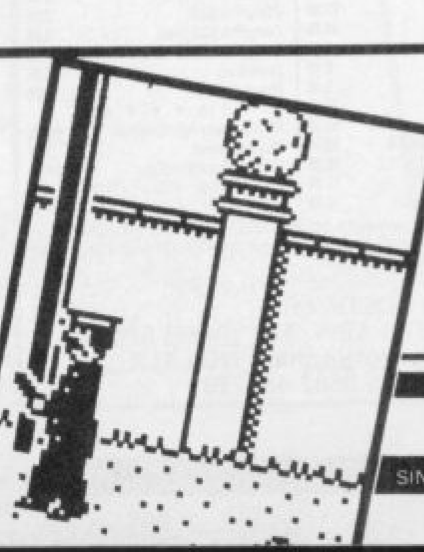
After a minute of this aimless waggling you have the choice of viewing the scene at normal or double speed, and if it's not up to scratch, reshooting it (if your budget permits).

The average film includes four scenes, set in a pretty limited selection of scenes including a garden, a hotel and a shop. Once you're happy with your production, you move to the Screen routine, where you have to sit through the whole bloody thing again and wait for the audience reaction in the form of newspaper headlines – in my case, something along the lines of "Chaplin Stinker Does Zippo Boxoffice".

The funnier the film, the more money you will find displayed on your accounts sheet at the end of the round. I guess that the aim of the game is to make all the films available, then die.

The game isn't so bad that Charlie Chaplin will be spinning in his grave; in fact, the basic idea is brilliant and the graphics are extremely cute. The trouble is that the gameplay is almost non-existent, and what there is, is unbelievably repetitive and monotonous. Pity, really■







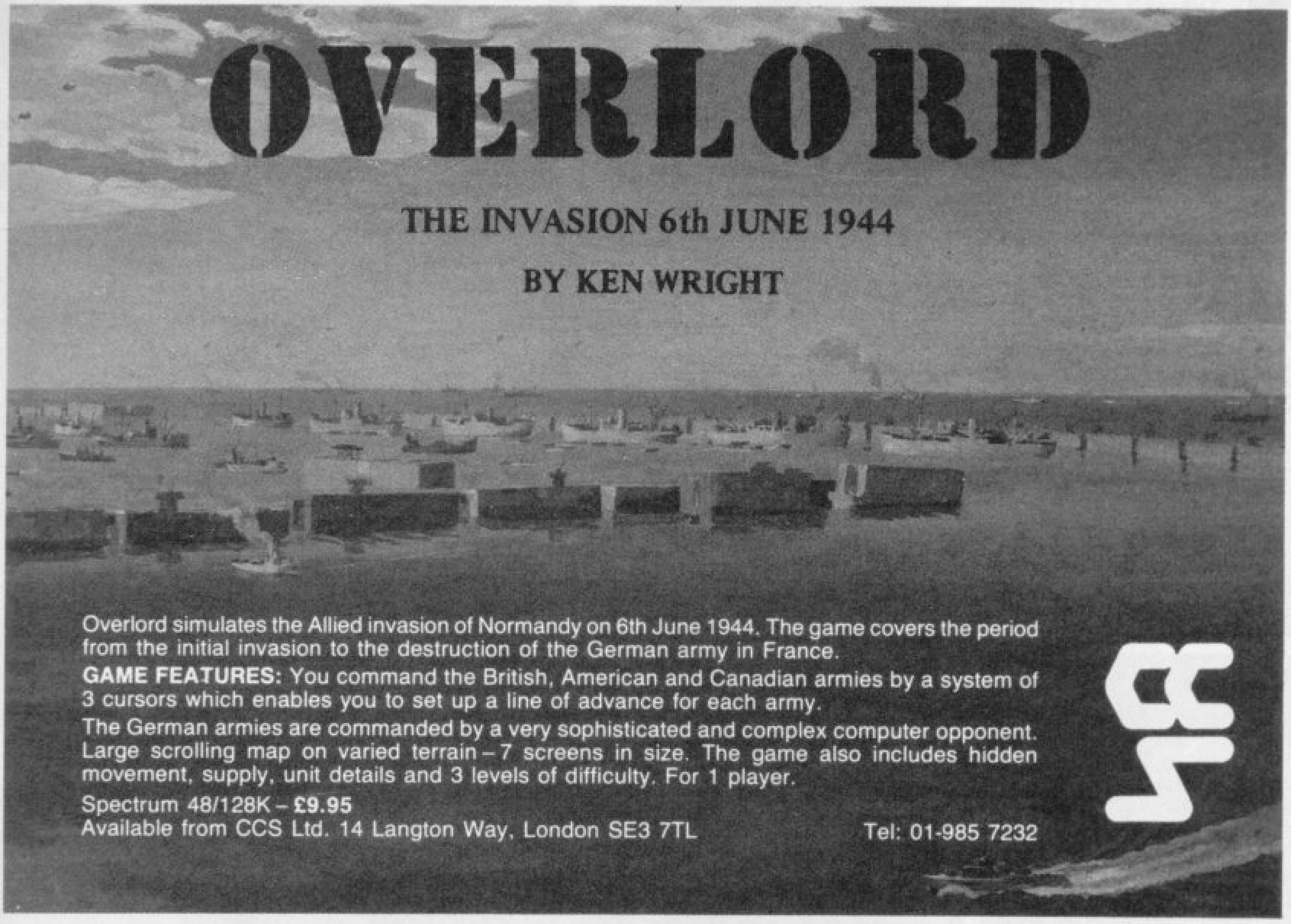
FAXBOX

Graphically engaging but ultimately disappointing movie spoof

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
Label: US Gold
Author: Bubbles Inc
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

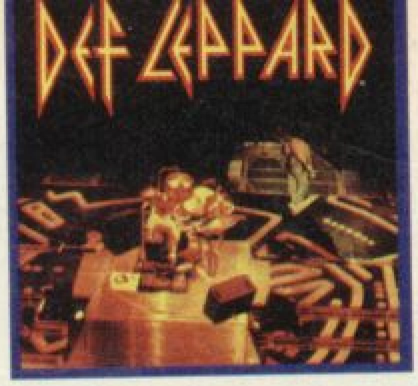
★★★☆☆
★★☆☆☆ 5


OVERLORD
THE INVASION 6th JUNE 1944
BY KEN WRIGHT
Overlord simulates the Allied invasion of Normandy on 6th June 1944. The game covers the period from the initial invasion to the destruction of the German army in France.
GAME FEATURES: You command the British, American and Canadian armies by a system of 3 cursors which enables you to set up a line of advance for each army.
The German armies are commanded by a very sophisticated and complex computer opponent. Large scrolling map on varied terrain – 7 screens in size. The game also includes hidden movement, supply, unit details and 3 levels of difficulty. For 1 player.
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MILES GORDON TECHNOLOGY
*Timings are approximate, depending on drive

ÖUTL

AOOW! MY EARS ARE BLEEDING



"I said a WELCOME to my SHOOOW!", screams a voice from behind the huge black curtain draped in front of the stage. The 'Hysteria' album cover. Immediately the crowd rises to its feet. A scream is sent boucing around the walls of Wembley Arena, and finally the curtain falls to the ground and the four from Sheffield and the one from Hackney bound on to the open area of their highly impressive set and launch themselves into the first of their 13 tracks ranged over the last 2 Leppard albums. Halfway through the first track and even I, Killjoy Dillon, find myself punching the air in a direct imitation of the band's lead singer, Joe Elliott, and screaming out the words to the songs along with hundreds of other Leppers. Def the band are, and Def I was afterwards. Loud? You could say that.

The vibrations sent through the ground by Sav's (Rick Savage, bass player) guitar easily measured 4 on the Richter scale. Visually the show was a stunner. Huge banks of multicoloured lights were around at various points, as normal, plus an array of lasers, used to create some startling effects. The Hysteria logo was projected, spun and twirled. Rick Allen and his drum kit were placed in a huge rotating pyramid. Talking of Rick, his drumming was spectacular. It's great to see that the horrific car crash that lost him his right arm a year ago hasn't lowered his standard, and he now drums excellently via a series of foot pedals.

The best night out I've had in a long time. Def Leppard was certainly an experience. Next year they have plans to do another tour, why not see if you can catch them?

MAX HEADROOM



He's b-b-b-b-back! **Max Headroom**, multi-media megastar and (probably) the world's only computer-generated TV personality, returns in a series of video adventures this month.

In this country, the **Max Headroom** pilot movie (reshown in April) was followed up by a series of pop video showcases. But in the States they saw new episodes with more American characters, followed by a series of one-hour episodes. Now these episodes are available on RCA/Columbia video. Each tape contains two episodes – Blipverts (the reshot pilot) and Rakers, Body Banks and Security Systems, and War and The Blanks. The stories feature Matt Frewer as Edison Carter, investigative reporter, and as Max Headroom.

Set twenty minutes into the future, where hundreds of TV staions which can never be switched off compete for the latest, greatest viewing thrills, the series was received so well by the American couch-potatoes that it was axed half-way through. Ho hum. **The Adventures of Max Headroom** will be available from all good video shops, but they'll cost about 40 quid, so it might make sense to wait until it turns up on Channel 4.

CHRIS JENKINS



Hurnhh ... hurnhh ... hurnhh ... (heavy breathing on telephone) ... I'm an Orc ... what colour are your buskins ...?

Yes, fighting fantasy has discovered the wonders of telephone technology. Now frustrated pixies everywhere can live out their adventures through ***F.I.S.T. – Fantasy Interactive Scenarios by Telephone.***

Designed by Steve Jackson and run by Computerdial, ***F.I.S.T.*** *places you in the world of Castle Mammon at the reasonable cost of 38p per minute at peak time). Dramatic sound effects enable you to hear the whiz of swords, the growling of demons, and the clink of gold pieces (falling into Computerdial's pockets). You make action choices by dialing different numbers using a menu system provided in the free Adventurer's pack, which includes a game background, rules, membership form, and technical details.*

Prize competitions and a live chatline are among the goodies promised for brave adventurers, and you can get details by sending an A5-sized SAE to F.I.S.T., c/o Computerdial Ltd, PO Box 530, Kensington High St, London W8 5NP. Mum and dad, lock up your telephone.

THOROUGHLY RIDICULOUS HEADWEAR 3 (OK, SO IT'S RUNNING ON A BIT, BUT IT STILL ISN'T A SERIES AND THIS IS DEFINITELY THE LAST PART)

Phwoaaar!!! If you want to look as doggone sexy as this, but in a macho, cool kind of a way of course, all you need to do is follow the SU Style-o-fax guide to sunglasses below. You'll have to follow it carefully, as everyone know that wearing a pair of sunglasses unsuited to your head, hairstyle or line of work is even more embarrassing than breaking wind in a swimming-pool full of nuns.



1 50's Ray-Ban Old Style
Worn by: Bruce Willis, Mickey Rourke, Matt Dillon, Jim "I had to try



SOME SILLY STUPID SUGARY SMELLY

1 June was the original title for the incredibly tedious sci-fi book by Frank Herbert which was turned into a film starring Sting which was equally awful and involved men disguised as jelly cubes fighting big worms on million-pound sound stages. The "J" was replaced by "D" in the marketing stage to toughen up the film's image. (Oh Jim, this is complete gibberish **GT**)

2 There isn't a single bank holiday in June.

3 A prominent scientist, Dr A. Twinkie (MA, BSC BAR) has been investigating the ventilation habits of the nation this month, the official beginning of the British Summer (weather, not time). His report, *Junes Help You Breathe More Easily* will probably never appear.

LAÑDS



COME FLY WITH ME

This summer the sky will be filled with flying thingies, so keep your toupee firmly glued on.

DRP Models is the company responsible for bringing a bit of hipness back to balsa wood gliders. The *Spacewings* series cost £2.95 each, they're easily assembled and launched with elastic catapults (not at the dog, please Timmy). The four gliders – *Commander, Interceptor, Starfire* and *Fireflash* – can each be constructed in nine different configurations, giving a total of – ooh, lots.

For the more traditional there are *Mustang, Hurricane* and *Spitfire* models, powered by wind-up elastic props, at £2.75, and for the more adventurous there's a realistic model of the *Tornado* fighter with a 145 mm wingspan at £3.95.

Guillow's produces some great authentic flying WW1 models, including a 20-inch span *Fokker DR1 Triplane* as flown by the Red Baron. This features plastic wheels, cowling, and engine, a plywood fuselage and a powerful rubber-band motor, all for £14.99. Also in the series are an *SE5A, Piper Cherokee* and *Cessna 150*.

For the more energetic, frisbees have been superceded by a new generation of aerodynamic marvels. The £5.99 *Bluebird Aerobie* is a rubber hoop which, it's claimed, flies three times further than a frisbee. There's also a smaller *Sprint* model, and at £5.99 the amazing *Whizzback*, with three projecting vanes which make it return to the thrower like a boomerang.

If you're a cheap bum you could always get a 99p *Proshot Laser Disc*, a yellow plastic hoop with all sorts of knurly bits, or even a *Macdonald's* frisbee at 22p with very pukeburger, at the risk of being laughed at in the park. Mind your heads.



very hard indeed to look as un-sexy as I did last month, honestly" Douglas. Not even God could afford a *real* pair of these things. They cost about £500 each (standard version), so you'll have to secretly buy some imitation £2.99 jobbies. High poseur value, though not to be worn if your face is too thin, or you'll look like you've got two black ovals hovvering on your face with no apparent means of support.

2 Goggle-o-matix

Worn by: Absolutely no-one with any sense at all, Emma from Advertising (under duress). If you see anyone wearing a pair of these, you can be sure they've got something to hide. Hideous bright monstrosities. A mixture of JL's (see below) and swimming goggles. Perforated at the side to let the perspiration caused by acute stupidity escape. Wear these anywhere other than a Club 18-30 holiday and expect to be treated like a bug-eyed monster from Mars, because that's exactly what you'll look like.

3 Gargoyle Mirrors

Worn by: Baddies in martial arts films, Chris Jenkins. Easily affordable and attainable, because not many people want them. Ultra slick bands of colour with tiny lenses (mirrors optional). Only big enough to cover your eyes while you squint. Good to wear in discos and other dark places. Bad to wear where anyone you might know will see you and point out the fact that you're not a lethal killing machine after all, and why didn't you remember that I have 2 bottles of half-cream, one full and a packet of cheese this morning, sonny?



4 JL's LSD Weird-Outs

Worn by: John Lennon, Lofty, some people in Easy Rider, Graham Taylor. Serious strangeness! For a fraction of the price of a Beatles compact disc, you can almost become Johnny L. Simply fasten these plain round sunglasses to your head, and people will look at you in the street and go, "Flip me! I could've sworn that was John Lennon in a pair of particularly sexy sunglasses." The thing is, while they look plain from the inside, the outer side of the lens is a psychedelic affair with swirly petrol-on-water patterns that make you look well bonkers.

5 Aviators

Worn by: Tom Cruise, Sean Penn, Jon Riglar. Original Ray-Bans high-prices make these extremely hard to get hold of. While sicky green and brown lenses are easy to get, black is almost impossible. Expect to pay upwards of £50 for the real thing. Stylish and exclusive. A thin nose is essential if they are to 'sit' well on the fizzog.

SEXY SORDID FACTS ABOUT JUNE

4 Chris Jenkins becomes a Very Old Sod Indeed in June. On the 28th day he becomes 28 years old, which means he is the son of Beelzebub or something.

5 June is not the only month in the calendar starting with J. January and July do too, but oddly enough,. November doesn't

6 Many of the women born in June are not, surprisingly enough, christened April or May for that matter.

7 Lots of famous people are called June – there's June Whitfield . . .

8 June was probably named after a Greek God or something or other.

HALLO SWEETIE

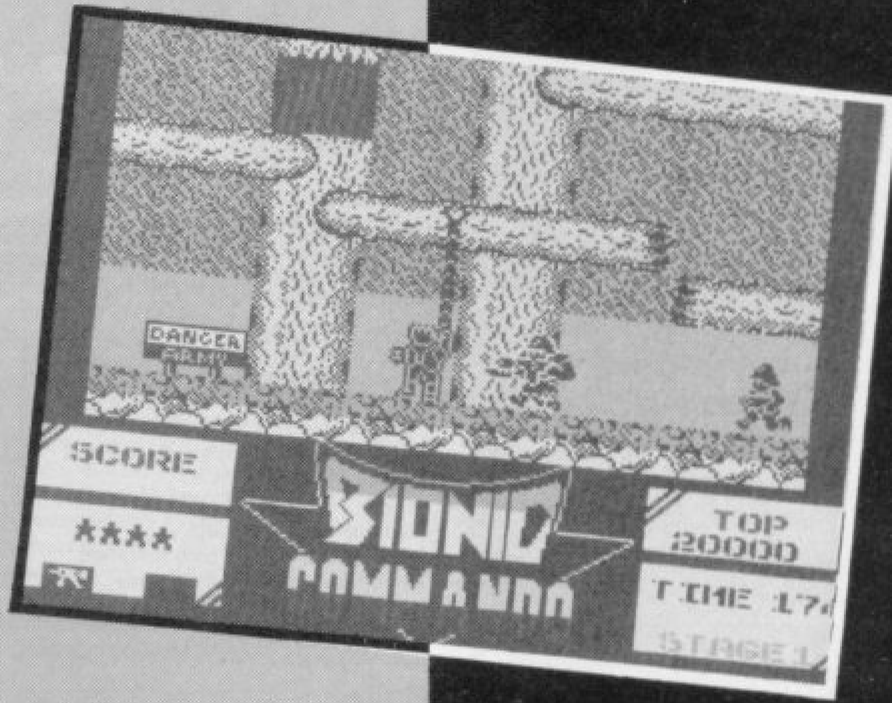
Tony 'Choccy Bikkie' Dillon puts some sticky things in his mouth. (Again)

1. **Mars**
   Rich, thick and very, very heavy.
2. **Biscuit and Raisin Yorkie**
   All the taste of bricks, with a few scraps of dry bread interlaced.
3. **Milky Bar**
   Aryan chocolate for anaemic imbeciles.
4. **Original Yorkie**
   Thick chunks for big truckers.
5. **Caramel (Cadbury's)**
   Guk filled chocolate bubbles.



BIONIC COMMANDOS





Bionic Commandos, if first impressions are allowed to last, is a reasonably faithful conversion of the coin-oip that just hasn't ended up being particularly playable, visually exciting or, well, interesting.

Sure, it looks reasonable, and there are a few nice touches, but it appears to be so poorly programmed – the graphics flicker like crazy – that most of the ideas seem to have been wasted.

There's no plot worth discussing. All you need to know is that you – a bionic commando – have to infiltrate an alien military establishment and destroy everything on the way.

B.C. is a variation on the platforms and ladders theme, except there aren't any ladders (What a crap analogy! Explain yourself – G.T.) The ladders have been removed and the platforms just hang in the air. The controls allow you to move left, right, up and down and fire. No jump. So how do you get up to the next level of girders/earth/platform? Easy. You use your telescopic bionic arm like a lassoo to cling on to the girders and winch yourself up.

The general idea is to work your way to the top of each level, shooting the bad guys and um, well that's it really. There's a fair number of aliens to bash. There are nasty little flicky things which lurk along the platforms and occasionally, chopping off your feet.

These, along with irritating little stormtroopers who jump around and shoot at you, form the main body of the alien army. As you progress deeper into alien territory (I always feel you should be going down in these games, don't you?) more bizarre foes appear. One of the most interesting is a kind of huge metal kangaroo with a tiny guy controlling it at the top.

There are also enormous – and largely static – robots that you can scale, at your own risk.

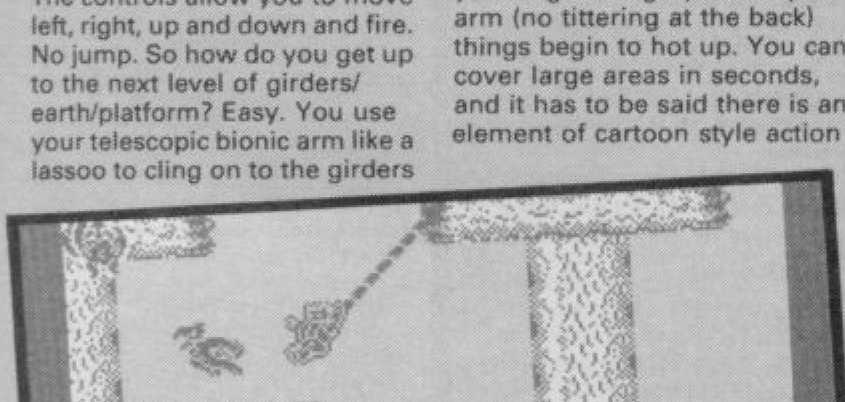
The gameplay definitely improves as the game goes on. Parachutes fall from the sky bearing enhanced weaponry. As far as I could tell, the only effect collecting one of these items has is to make your bionic arm longer and faster. Once you've got a highly developed arm (no tittering at the back) things begin to hot up. You can cover large areas in seconds, and it has to be said there is an element of cartoon style action swinging on on a bionic arm like Tarzan on a vine and blasting away like Judge Dredd in a bad mood.

Don't be mislead into thinking the graphics are of cartoon quality..Although colour has been used to some effect, there are parts of scenery that are simply inexcusably poorly drawn – even unfinished looking. Huge areas of square white "stuff" at the top of some levels just look ridiculous. Everyone should know that you just can't get away with that sort of thing.

Your hero, a dwarfish black-outline figure scuttles around satisfactorily, apart from the odd occasion when he develops an incredible case of the flickers. Control is tricky at times, and unless your joystick is very accurate, you'll have trouble using your arm in those vital diagonal directions. Since there is no "Extend arm" control, you have to combine left and up, right and up or use up alone to extend, which takes an awful lot of getting used to.

As well as having a limited supply of lives, you're racing against the clock too, so life is really quite difficult.

Bionic Commandos is a disappointment after the last Cap-com title, **Streetfighter.** It's fast and furious, but feels unpolished and is graphically simplistic. If you were a big fan of the arcade game, maybe this is one for you. It's not crap, but it certainly isn't what we've come to expect■





FAXBOX

Acceptable though unexciting conversion. Lots of nice points negated by lots of niggles

BIONIC COMMANDO
Label: Go!
Author: Software Creations
Price: £8.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K
Reviewer:

★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ 7

IF you reckon we're talking rubbish don't just stand there . . .
Tell us what you think.
Stick your comments on paper, fill in and cut out the coupon below and send it in . . .
And if you don't send us your picture – the sillier the better – we'll have to print a picture of a slug

JIM



COMBAT SCHOOL

Combat School is really great,
buy it now don't be too late,
SU gave it just 9 stars,
where's the Classic you retards?

Running, jumping, shooting too,
they really know how to test you.
Get on to the next event,
or back home's where you'll be sent.

I've only found a few things wrong,
my joystick's bust and that's not on.
The dreaded bug was also here,
the assault course suddenly went all queer!

But it just has to be said,
I can't get this game outa my head.
Buy **Combat School** right away,
hurry up no don't delay.

CHORUS: *I wanna have this poem printed*
I wanna get a five pound cheque.
I wanna have this poem printed,
Or I'll be a nervous wreck!

Scott Denyer
Corringham
Essex
Putting his fiver towards: Out Run.

● If anyone else would like to write in with a rhyming Write Stuff, they shouldn't bother.

720°

Cor!! If you love skateboarding then you'll love **720°**. The graphics are just brilliant, and the soundtrack is out of this world. It has to be rated as a Classic by anyone's standards.

720° is definitely worth the asking price of £8.99, and it should be at the top of everybody's game-playing list. If you don't purchase this great game then you won't know what you're missing.

So Buy, or Die.

Gavin Stowers
Cambridgeshire
Putting his fiver towards: Gauntlet II

● Looks like we picked a winner again.

COMBAT SCHOOL

I think your mark of nine stars for **Combat School** was very fair. It is an excellent game, but there is one snag. It's so easy! The only challenging part is the fight instructor stage, and even that is just a formality after the first few goes.

Despite the fact that I seem to be spending all my time criticising it I still think that **Combat School** is one of Ocean's best to date. A top class game that'll give you hours of enjoyment, and for the price it's a must. You won't be disappointed.

Paul Jenkins
Wales
Putting his fiver towards: Platoon.

● You're obviously tougher than us! We were all hot and sticky after the first stage, but there's probably more than one explanation for that . . .

OUT RUN

Why oh why only give **Out Run** a measly 8 stars when it deserves at least a Classic? The game can only be described as superb, especially when you compare it with other simulations round at the moment.

You declined to tell us about the great soundtrack on side two of the tape, and playing this with the tape makes you really feel as if you're clocking up the promised 286 mph along Devil's Canyon or Coconut Grove. Or any one of the 15 levels which are available to you.

The only complaint that I have is that **Out Run** occasionally falls down on the colour content, but then again, have you seen the Commodore version, ugh, ick!

All that aside, I think that your magazine is, in the words of the immortal Dame Edna, "Pretty Spooky."

Christopher Burton
Swansea
Putting his fiver towards: Rolling Thunder

● Jim says: Come on, the speed is nowhere near that of the arcade. It was almost impossible to convert Out Run, so the chances of a Classic-worthy game were slim to say the least.

GAUNTLET II

"It's a totally new game. **Gauntlet II** is not just another in the enthralling crusade, it is a whole new experience in action-packed adventure." That's what the ad said, but methinks I've heard this all before. However, SU seemed to confirm this statement with their review, so off I trotted to the shop and bought a copy. Guess what? The graphics may well bear a ridiculous resemblance to the original **Gauntlet**, but **Gauntlet II** is nevertheless chock-a-block full of new features like the IT Monster, moving walls and exits and so on.

And the speed . . .

Chris Twentyman
London
Putting his fiver towards: Firefly

● Jim says: What are you trying to say? Do you like it or not? Make up your mind, man

FIREFLY

Aargh! How could you give **Firefly** a Classic? It is utter c**p.

The teleport screen is more luck that co-ordination, if you fail you get blown up, which happens to be 9 out of 10. Your weapon is an "Octo-photonic plasma disruptor ball shooter" which is useless to aim and taks a long time to come back to you thus getting you killed. This tripe only deserves six stars max!

Jim Douglas bodges a review again.

● Bodge? Oh contraire, my fluffy sausage. I didn't have any problems in the timing department, but then I've got a CSE in telling the time and you probably haven't.



TAMARA

BUBBLE BOBBLE

Mefinks you should have given **Bubble Bobble** a much better review. Now then, how in God's name does Tamara Howard think that **BB** is like **PacMan?** Who knows how she worked that one out! It's an absolute mystery to me. I still think that **Bubble Bobble** should have got at least 5 times the amount (and that's a quadruple Classic to the likes of you and me)! Cool music (128-wise), cool game, bad review.

So do us a favour, get Kamikaze Bear to gun down Tamara Howard. Oh, and by the way, I can get to Level 80, beat that Tamara!

Ian Gillan
Renfrewshire
Putting his fiver towards: 720°

● Tamara says: I don't think that I said BB was like PacMan, David Kelly put it in while I wasn't looking. Besides anything that cute doesn't deserve a Classic. Beat Level 80? Can't be bothered, but I (and Kami for that matter) would sure as hell like to beat you up!

RAMPAGE

Tut! Tut! Tut! What a bunch of wallies you are there! (Only kidding). In last month's issue you reviewed **Rampage.** I bought the game before you reviewed it, stupid as I was. But to be honest, I thought that it was great!

It's well worth the money and it's certainly in no way boring. Only an idiot could think that it was, and there's hardly any colour clash. The idea of the computer playing with you is a great one, although you put it down.

You gave it 6 stars. I'd give it ten stars, it's such a great bash-'em-up game for relieving stress, usually brought on by bad reviews.

Rampage is MEGABRILLIANT. So you can just shove that up your exhaust pipes. But I still love your magazine (slurp)

William Proops
Avon
Putting his fiver towards: Bubble Bobble

IMPORTANT NOTICE
SU CUTS WRITE STUFF PAYMENTS SHOCK

It's true, from now on all Write Stuff entries will be paid only five pounds instead of ten. "Meanies" you cry. Not so, nor will we spend the money we save on holidays in exotic climes. We did it for you. (Cries of "Lies" "Cheats")

The point is we were getting so many Write Stuff entries the chance of any particular person ever getting their opinion printed was getting about one in a hundred. By cutting the cash to a (still generous) fiver we hope to separate those who have a real opinion to express from the plain greedy and give the former more chance to get printed. Hope you agree.

The WRITE STUFF?!



GRAHAM

IKARI WARRIORS

I was appalled, nay, disgusted, when you gave this mega crucial game seven stars. It deserves a Classic on its worst day. Who is this Graham Taylor (I hope it's not contagious) The graphics are well defined and extremely well animated and the use of colour is absolutely brill. Shame on you SU! Although your magazine is nearly as good as the game giving it seven stars is just not on I'm afraid. I have played it almost non-stop since I got it, it's so addictive, my mother's getting worried. I have in fact completed the game with a score of 1,139,000 and got halfway through it again. So it's an old plot, but it's completely brilliantly converted. So what if it's a little late, it doesn't make any difference to the game (bias reviewer). But don't listen to this creature called Graham listen to me faithful, fellow readers, of the mega amazingly crucial magazine SU, rush out and buy **Ikari Warriors.** Elite at its Elitest.

Thomas McGovern
London
Putting his fiver towards: Rolling Thunder

● ***Ho humm, that's what I said, OK but done before – a lot, can't see what you find to get so excited about. As for me Graham Taylor at your service – I am the editor of this magazine.***

IKARI WARRIORS

Shock horror steps back in amazement . . . urgh, flamin' dogs! You almost got it right this time, but don't you think 7 stars was a bit stingy? It should have got at least 8 or 9. It's certainly addictive. Just as you think you've got as far as you can manage wahey! Off you go again. All right the graphics aren't that good but the game play makes up for it, especially with all those little bonus thingies, flashing (ooer) all over the place. It's a pretty faithful conversion, even you've got to admit that. All the bits and pieces present in the original, tanks are in the right place and there are even soldiers in the water. The only problem is the massive box. My computer desk's bursting at the seams. All good things must come to an end though so I'll say cheerio. I'm just off to nail my brother to the wall whilst playing **Ikari Warriors.**

Russell Doughty
Bedfordshire
Putting his fiver towards: Cybernoid

● ***Completely agree with the facts as stated but they add up to a fat 7 to me, nothing more. Yes, everything is in the right place, the gameplay's up to scratch, but it's still only a competent conversion of a fairly nice coin-op. Put it next to some of the more original games on the market at the moment, such as Firefly (which we thought really deserved a Classic) and you've got to admit that 7 stars was a fair mark.***





AGENT X II

I totally disagree with your review of **Agent X II** I think you should give at least 6 stars. I mean, "But terrible colour clash, highly mediocre." Come on! are you colour blind! OK in the first part, (48K mode) there isn't any sound (apart from the menu bit) but on part 2 it's great! **Jet Set Willy**? nothing like it! Part two, and its a clone of **Arkanoid** is it? What's **Arkanoid** a clone of? Eh? Eh? All right I do admit the ball does move a bit too fast but it's OK. By the way how come you printed the price (which should have been £1.99) two times, and there wasn't the name of the review. Still I buy your brilliant mag, even if you do make the odd mistake . . .

Paul Heron
Norwich
Putting his fiver towards: Angle Ball.

● ***Look, I never claimed to be God, although there are a few people out there who would say I could get away with a claim like that (Hello mum) and obviously there are times when even I get things wrong. But this isn't one of them. Listen matey, when I say that I see terrible colour clash, I mean it, I saw it. If you've only got the eyesight of a half-asleep hamster then that's your problem. And as Arkanoid clones go, this was one of the worst, I think and I'm the reviewer and you're the reader and the customer's always right and so I think that about sums the whole thing up really doesn't it? (Tony take 2 valium, have a lie down and then come to my study for intensive psychotherapy after school – GT)***

KIKSTART 2

Mastertronic got it right this time. What? Yes you guessed it, it's **Kikstart 2.** The good thing about it is that you can make your own course, so you can make it as hard or as easy as you like. It is one of the best budget games I have ever seen, although the colour could have been better.

You can play 1 or 2 players together, because the screen is split in 2 so player 1 is on the top and player 2 is on the bottom, or if you are playing the computer the computer is on the bottom. You can choose any of the 25 courses, or you can have random ones. So my advice to all you out there is to go and buy it now!

Christopher Nash
Birmingham
Putting his fiver towards: 720°.

● ***Well we liked it too – great minds think alike!***

OINK

YSPOG! Tony Dillon, what in God's name do you think you are doing giving **Oink** 6 stars? It's a load of old pooh! The graphics are hopeless and the stages are impossibly tedious. Dull dull dull. Trashman flies so slowly you can go to the loo and come back before he's moved one pixel, and the theme of filling up a magazine is cobblers. Who gives a monkey's armpit what goes where on what page. All I'm interested in is a bit of killing. Death and destruction that's the stuff. Stuff all this nancy-boy Pete's Pimple rubbish. Slow boring and hopeless.

Send Tony Dillon to the reviewer's scrapheap. He's a burnout. A no-hoper.

Cecil De La Gets
London
I'd put my fiver towards: getting my bike fixed

● ***Blimey! You're a bit stroppy aren't you? I did say many times throughout the review that I didn't think it was a great game, but it was the oddness of the thing and the combined strangeness that made it appeal. I agree the graphics are useless and it's not very exciting in places, but you've got to admit that it's a bit of a larf, isn't it?***

Every so often – well very often actually – you write to tell us that we know nothing about anything and insist that some program we trashed is actually the best game ever. Conversely you blast us for saying something is great that you absolutely loath and detest.

Enough is enough. We can't take any more, if you think you're as clever you write the damn magazine. We mean it!

Every month we'll devote a page to a selection of your opinions on the latest software. Don't get mad – write the review you think the game should have received and we (subject only to space) will print it.

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One special request: we want to know what you look like so send us a picture. Any old picture will do – you at home, in Ibiza, in the garden, even making silly faces in photobooths, we don't care.

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Yes, it's a rough old life being a Vixen, so to cheer you up, those kind people at Martech would like to give you a spiffy stereo radio cassette recorder, so you can put your feet up and listen to your new *Def Leppard* cassette after a hard day hunting dinosaurs. BUT we can't just give it away to any old neanderthal; the winner must prove his knowledge of prehistoric life by answering three terrifically hard questions. Just fill in the right answers, add your name and address, and post the coupon to GRR GRR I'M A TYRANNOSAURUS COMPETITION, Sinclair User, 14 Holkham Road, Orton Peterborough PE2 0UF. Employees of Lord EMAP, their budgies, toothbrushes and hamsters are not allowed to enter. Closing date is June 30th; and entries recieved after that date will be eaten.

1 Gorgeous pouting Corinne Russell has appeared as a dancer on
A) The Benny Hill Show B) News at Ten
C) Question Time
2 A Vixen is a female fox. What is a female deer called?
A) A panda B) A Scotch Egg C) A doe
3 Which of the following is not a type of dinosaur?
A) Tyrannosaurus B) Stalagmite
C) Brontosaurus

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Answers: 1 2 3



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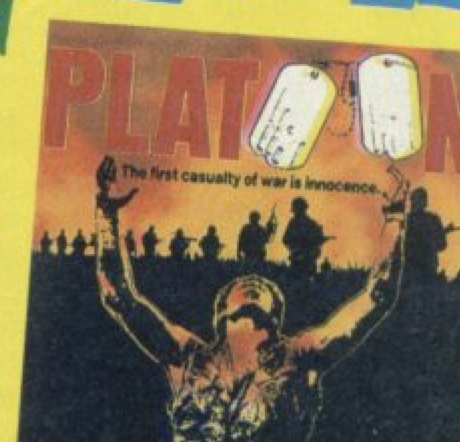
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PLATOON

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COIN

Yup, mug that crinkly, empty those piggy banks and get down to the local arcades where SU has been going all the way this month – all the way to that annoying Level 15 on **Zybots,** all the way to the end of **Shinobi** and all the way to America to play **Temco Bowl.**

Final Lap

__Final Lap__ is a machine that was first shown in this country at an exhibition in early January – and the first machines are now finding their way on to the street. Quite simply, it's a great Formula One racing game, in the tradition of another Namco game, __Pole Position,__ except for three things. First, it's the best driving simulation to date – in that the on screen car behaves sensibly – you can oversteer for example, which means you can't use the old __Pole Position__ tried and tested way of spinning the wheel hugely fast to skid round corners at high speed. Secondly, the ingenious construction of the unit consists of two sit-in monitors that are linked together. You can play by yourself (vs the computer cars) or vs them plus Player Two, who is sitting next to you. Talk about niggle – it really is your manhood at stake as you struggle to keep ahead/catch up of the humanoid to your left/right. But if anything could be fabbier than that, up to four units (that's eight punters) can be networked toegether on one site at once. Imagine that. A real time eight player race!!!!

The bad news is that the units cost way over 10 grand each (and almost that much to play!!), so for any unit to get four … that's a lot of money to tie away on one game. Still, maybe one of the premiere amusement palaces might have the cash, write if you know please!

Gameplay is via steering wheel, low/high gear selector and accelerator and brake set out as in a real car. Only one course, alas, which can be mastered after a fashion in around 30 minutes. Still here we are talking about neat, big and meaty, well sage.

FAXBOX

Great car racing with multi-player capabilities. The best.

Gamplay **9**
Graphics **9**
Sound **10**
Addictiveness **9**

OVERALL RATING **9**



Temco Bowl

There hasn't been a truly satisfactory American Football vid yet. __10 Yard Fight__ was the best – and that wasn't saying much. Well, gridiron fans, hold your breath no longer – __Temco Bowl__ is here and it is superb.

Made by Temco (yes – obviously an off day at the Marketing Dept the day they thought this name up) and originally spotted at the Las Vegas CES show this year it's a one to four player American Football game that features the biggest sprites imaginable. Horizontally scrolling across two screens, it's best played with four players; two a side, alternating between quarterback and a field position. Passing is allowed (and accurate), so a real game with halfway proper tactics can be played. Controls consist of a joystick and two buttons – nothing too complex and it's easy to get used to. Grab three friends and go and find one.

FAXBOX

Fun American Football game for 1-4 players, just what the fans wanted.

Gameplay **8**
Graphics **9**
Sound **7**
Addictiveness **8**

OVERALL RATING **8**





Shinobi

After the success of **Rolling Thunder** at the box office, clones were only a matter of time. And **Shinobi** is probably the best of them. OK, so it's another Martial Arts bash (the really nice things about **Rolling Thunder** was its weird

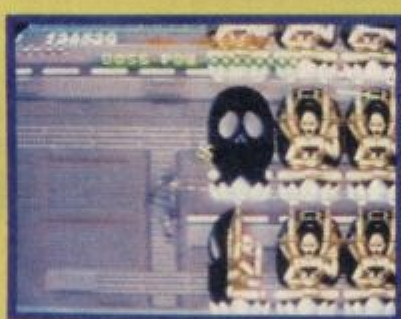


H.P. Lovecraft feel) but a fair bit of thought has gone into making it sufficiently different to be familiar without being boring.

Scenario – as if you need one – is something to do with Ninja terrorists, but basically you have to slash/fire/meditate through five levels of assorted thuggery.

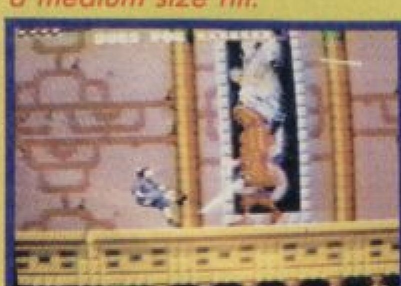
Stage One is titled **Keh Oh,** probably a Chinese TV cook in real life, but in this game, a particularly vicious nasty that you have to get rid of after you've completed the routine of kicking his underlings to bits and releasing some hostages. In fact, he's probably been eating Chilli as he spits out fireballs that scribe circular patterns – which you must dodge between to put the boot of the righteous well in.

Stage two is set on the water front and is called **Black Turtles,** maybe they make the helicopter that you knock out at the end of the section. What you're supposed to to be aiming for here, by the way, is the glowing front nosecone of the craft.



Three, entitled **Mandara** is really odd, with Four, **Lobster,** getting a bit more conventional, but harder. Finally there's the **Masked Ninja.** Oooer – talk about hard.

The game plays nicely all the way through – including the Shukren throwing bonus levels – and looks set to be a medium size hit.



FAXBOX

Conventional combat ideas – but the gameplay makes up to make a winner.

Gameplay **9**
Sound **8**
Graphics **7**
Addictiveness **8**

OVERALL RATING **8**

Pin Ball of the Month–Victory by Gottlieb

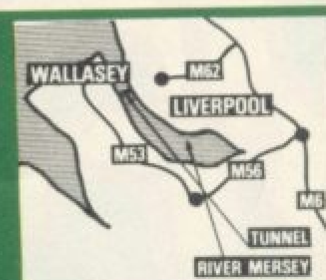
This is a table whose theme is some kind of rally/race, so there's lots of chances to use fancy sampled sounds, etc. They do, but more to the point it's a good play as well. Not too difficult to learn there are sensible and logical targets to go for and some imaginative use of multi-level ... however, the SU team found it very easy to rack up the extra credits during out last marathon session down at Southend. The top mini-table, if played correctly, will give you a chance at a special relatively easily. See the four targets, you must knock them down about eight times in one try (ie the ball mustn't come down to the lower table) which lights up a Special on the far right target. As well as racking up the points away. A good tip if you're running out of money.

One nasty thing though – there's a "Spin out" bumper that if you hit will kill the machine for dead. Blagh!

Meanwhile what's new? It had to happen, a "Third Generation" version of **Head-On** from Sega, called **Counter Run** ... looked a bit disappointing. A new **Nemesis** clone called **Vulcan Venture.** An **Operation Wolf** clone set in gangster land called **Dead Angie.** Yet another **Arkanoid** inspired job, **Goindoi** and the most frantic pin table ever – **Blockbuster 100** from Bally which we'll be trying to play some more for next month. And 3-D arcade games ... the first from Taito, a racing game called **Continental Circus,** complete with 3-D specs. Finally a quick mention of G. Taylor, Editor of this mag who has become crazed after playing **Krusha** for eighteen hours ... does anyone know of an antidote?



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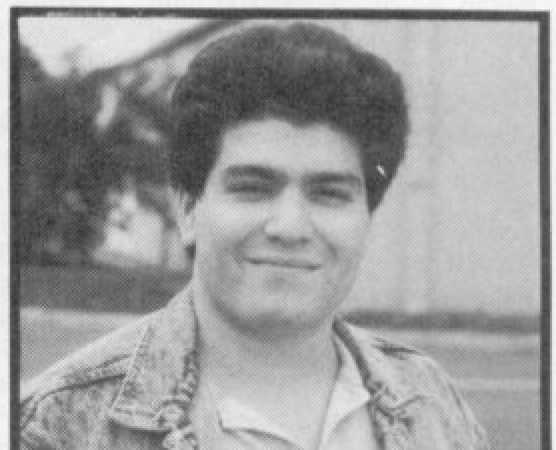
BACKGROUND NOISE

From the outset of the *Cybernoid* project, I decided to adopt the following games design ideology:

'If something's worth doing, it's worth over doing!'

After the popularity of *Exolon*, Andrew Hewson and I decided that it would be a sensible idea to develop some of the game's best features (such as the big explosions and colourful graphics), improve them, and incorporate them into *Cybernoid*. It was important, though, not to rest on our laurels and to ensure that *Cybernoid* had totally

CYBERNOID



different gameplay characteristics.

During the period of *Cybernoid's* development there was a plethora of games on the market and in the arcades that featured multiple weapons systems that we could utilise. After studying these games I indulged in a little plagiarism, and nicked the idea for *Cybernoid*! Instead of having the usual boring array of rear guns, side guns and double guns etc, I opted for a system whereby all the weapons were totally distinct in their operation and in the graphic effects which they created.

The way the weapons were to be selected during the game caused a few problems. Initially, it was suggested that weapons should be selectable with a joystick, but this proved to be very clumsy and inaccurate whilst you were zapping at full steam. In the end I settled for a straight forward – press 1 for bombs, press 2 for mines etc. After a bit of practice I found I could select the correct weapon without looking at the keyboard.

Cybernoid was to be a fast and destructive shoot-'em-up with strategic elements to add depth to gameplay. The main problem (as usual) was to ensure that the program ran as fast as possible. As there were so many moving graphics in *Cybernoid*, it was important that the sprite routines were very fast. All the sprite data was stored pre-shifted to the required pixel positions for maximum speed. This allowed a large number of sprites to move simultaneously at 25 frames a second.

Whilst we can never be rid of attributed problems (short of having single colour games – yuk), they can be minimised to an extent where they are hardly noticeable. I made the background graphics have colour priority over the moving sprites i.e. if a sprite moved over the background, the sprite would assume the background colour. Sprites on top of one another only remained so for a fraction of a second, so any attribute flicker was very brief.

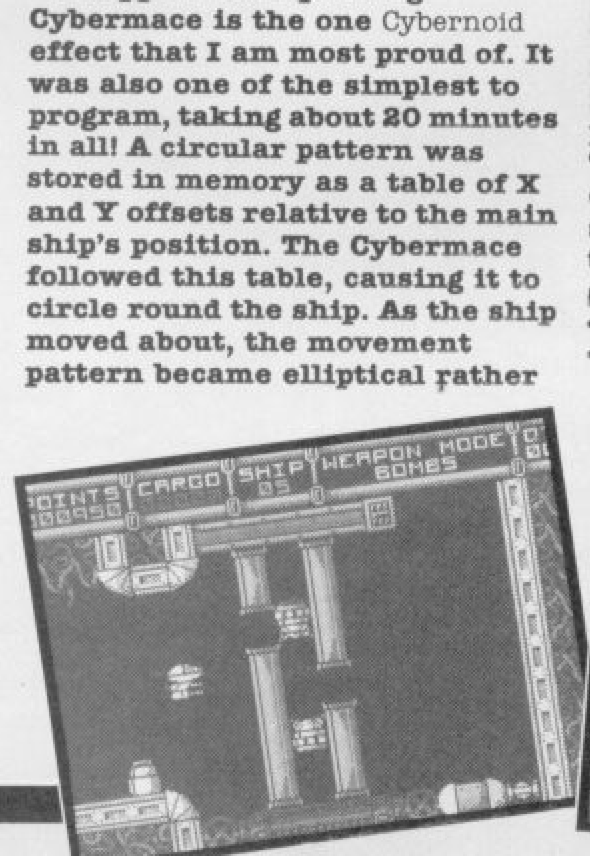
Music and sound effects are an often neglected part of Spectrum games, and I'm one of the largest culprits! So I thought it would be nice to go overboard on the audio aspects of *Cybernoid*. Dave Rogers was commissioned by Hewson to produce a main tune and sound effects. Anyone who has played the game will know that he excelled himself. The sound generating routine was performed fifty times a second giving constant music throughout the game. All the audio data and code used up about 4K of memory and was well worth the rather tight squeeze I had at the end of the project.

I suppose the Spinning Cybermace is the one *Cybernoid* effect that I am most proud of. It was also one of the simplest to program, taking about 20 minutes in all! A circular pattern was stored in memory as a table of X and Y offsets relative to the main ship's position. The Cybermace followed this table, causing it to circle round the ship. As the ship moved about, the movement pattern became elliptical rather than circular creating a very aesthetically pleasing (and unintentional) effect. I then added the firey trail . . . et voila!

Cybernoid was developed on an IBM PC running a super-fast assembler and editor. It assembled a 200K source file in a few seconds, after which the assembled program is transmitted to the Spectrum via a parallel link. The assembler package also features a powerful monitor that can dynamically alter and examine the Spectrum's memory as the game runs.

All the graphics and maps were designed on an Atari ST, running a specialised games design art package. The raw graphics data was converted to Spectrum format data and then incorporated into the main program ready to be assembled. This type of sophisticated games development system is fairly standard in the games industry so there are no excuses for naff games any more (unfortunately!)

Raffaele Cecco





HOW

Welcome to H the H and a subject SU gets almost more letters on than anything else – Uridium. **Check out also some star tips from Damien Scattergood!**

...DO YOU CREATE THE INE

Inertia, no problems! This time I've called up Steve Marsden who's writing **Blood Brothers** for Gremlin to answer this question 'cos he's got lots of neat inertial effect in there. Unfortunately Steve goes on a bit, so you're getting half the answer this month and the other half ... yes you've guessed it – next month! Go for it Steve ...

Once it was decided that **Blood Brothers** was to feature characters based on the good old thrustpack wielding spaceman genre, we wanted to abandon the normal 'instant response' type of sprite control and go for something a little more lifelike. OK, the term 'instant response' sounds a bit like one of those Hi-Fi parameters that the Dixon's salesman keeps quoting at you when you're looking at the latest CD players, but seriously though, let me explain. Take a look at most games and watch the way the main characters move – joystick right, and the character moves right (instantly) – joystick left, and hey presto the character moves left. Taking this point further, when we stop applying the directional input – the character stops instantly.

This kind of control has become the norm for ninety nine percent of games and it is something that programmers (and you the buying public) have come to accept. Cast your minds back a couple of years to the Hewson game **Uridium.** Originally developed on the Commodore 64, this game employed an 'inertial' type of response in order to give the realistic feel demanded by such a game. (For those of you who haven't seen **Uridium** – go and scrounge a copy from somebody). Just imagine the same game without the inertia effects – yes, it would look very second rate and probably the game would never have achieved the success it did. The gradual speeding up and slowing down of objects produces the physical effect know as inertia that affects our everday lives. The man firing a rifle, the force of the bullet leaving the gun barrel imparts a reaction to the man known as recoil. Inertia and recoil are only two real-life effects that act upon moving bodies – we are also affected by gravity, we have different masses and a moving mass also has momentum and possibly friction if it is moving agains a solid surface.

Zzzzz! Is that somebody snoring out there? OK, it does sound a bit like the old school physics lesson. Well it is to a certain extent and that is probably why nine out of ten games prefer not to use physics when it comes to animation routines. If we go back and examine our aims with the **Blood Brother** animation techniques, we find that all we were after was a more realistic movement routine which simulated the effects of inertia, gravity, recoil etc. In a Spectrum game which demands so much of the limited computing time available, it would be impossible to have complex mathematical formulae dealing with logarithms and other functions for two reasons – (1) The Z80 microprocessor doesn't like logarithms and complex maths, (2) Neither do I.

The Basic Game Loop

To try and understand how a

... DO YOU USE BASIC PLOT, DRAW AND CIRCLE

Hmmm, I thought. Cough, splutter, cough, I thought. How do you use *Plot, Draw* and *Circle* in machine code? More to the point why use *Plot, Draw* and *Circle* in machine code?

I rang Damien Scattergood 'cos he's a super duper mega-expert at using the Spectrum Rom. OK Damien:

Plot:

This is the simplest to use of all the routines. The easiest method of using this routine is to call it from location #22E5 (8933 decimal). On entry, the routine expects to have the x, y co-ordinates of the point to be plotted in the BC register pair, so to plot a point equivalent to Basic's, *Plot* 100,90 we only need to write ...

```
LD BC, #5A64   ;   Plot 100,90
CALL #22E5     ;   call Plot Rom routine
RET            ;   return to Basic
```

The first thing this routine does is to store the pixel address in the sytem variable *Coords* (23677-23678). It then works out the address of the pixel to Plot and sets it. It will also work correctly if the *Over* 1 command has been issued from either Basic or machine code.

Calling the *Draw* and *Circle* routines has the effect of corrupting the information held in the alternate HL register pair. Unfortunately the contents of the alternate HL register pair is needed by Basic and so if we wish to return to Basic then this register pair must be saved and later restored.

First we must switch to the alternate register set by issuing the EXX command. This will allow us to use a Push HL command to save the alternate register pair which we then follow with another EXX command to bring back the normal register set. On return from our routine, we will issue the same commands except we use a Pop HL instead of the Push HL command to restore our old H'L'.

Draw:

This routine which is located at #24BA (9402) requires 2 register pairs to be set up. BC must hold the absolute values of x and y, the steps of the *Draw* statement. DE must hold SGN x and SGN y, the directions of the plot. That is, if we wanted to *Draw* 50, −50 we would use

...

```
EXX            ;   Save H'L'
PUSH HL        ;
EXX            ;
LD BC,#3232    ;   distances 50,50
LD DE,#FF01    ;   directions −50,50
CALL #24BA     ;   draw the line
EXX            ;   restore H'L'
POP HL         ;
EXX            ;
RET            ;
```

The routine draws from the last point plotted. This value is stored in the Coords system variable. So, if we wanted to set the last point plotted we could easily do this by either plotting the point using the plot command or by simply setting the value of Coords to the point we wish to draw from. This is easily done in assembler with

...

```
LD A,100
LD (COORDS+0),A   ;   first co-ordinate
LD A,100
LD (COORDS+1),A   ;   second co-ordinate
```

Circle:

This Rom routine is slightly different from the others in so far as the values to be used in the *Circle* command must be placed on to the calculator stack. This does not pose that many problems, as there are already available to us routines to put numbers on to the calculator stack. The simplest of these to use is Stack-A which takes the value stored in the A register and places it on to the calcula-

THE HELL!!!

...RTIAL EFFECTS IN URIDIUM?

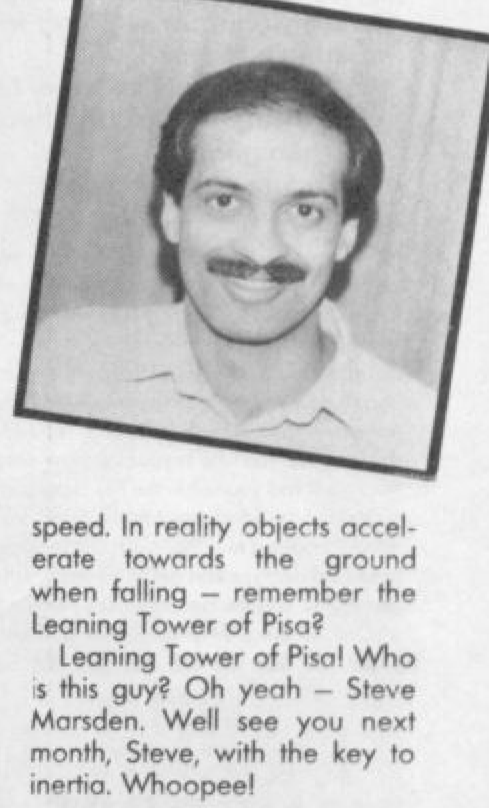
simple inertia system works, first of all I will describe how the majority of 'instant response' games work. Table 3 shows the basic game loop. It is simply a sequence of routines which are executed consecutively and over a period of between 1/50th second (20 milliseconds) and 1/12th second (80 milliseconds). Anything slower than this is pushing it to say the least and the game may suffer from flicker and jerky movements (more on that subject another time). You will note that the final routine in the loop is invariably an output or display type of routine.

Suppose the example game loop in Table 3 is designed to output one animated character. The character will typically have a set of variables, with numerous different functions – such as screen co-ordinates, shape size, pointers to shape data, flags etc etc. Each time round the game loop, the input devices (posh terminology for keyboard or joystick) will be scanned and the result of this scan will determine the action to take on the main character's movement. A simple analogy to this mechanism is in a cursor movement routine. The cursor is a blob on the screen which has a pair of co-ordinates (X and Y). Keyboard input acts upon the cursor blob like so:

Right – Increment the X co-ordinate
Left – Decrement the X co-ordinate
Down – Increment the Y co-ordinate
Up – Decrement the Y co-ordinate

This is obviously a simplistic view of the cursor routine, but the important thing is to understand the way a character is moved – the character has co-ordinates and to move the character we change the co-ordinate(s) and redraw the character in its new position. Combinations of changing both X and Y simultaneously produce diagonal movements.

Now it is probably clear why most programmers opt for this type of control system. Yes you've got it! They do it 'cos it's easy. However, trying to interface ever a simple function such as gravity in this 'instant response' system is quite tricky. We can add a fixed offset to the Y co-ordinate which is like permanently selecting down joystick. However, to go upwards we would have to subtract a number which is large enough to overcome the downward offset value. This will still not produce a realistic effect because the sprite will move downwards at fixed speed. In reality objects accelerate towards the ground when falling – remember the Leaning Tower of Pisa?



Leaning Tower of Pisa! Who is this guy? Oh yeah – Steve Marsden. Well see you next month, Steve, with the key to inertia. Whoopee!

...COMMANDS IN M/C?

...tor stack for us. Stack A is located at #2D28 (11560).

The values of the *Circle* command are placed on to the stack in the same order as in Basic. So if we wanted to do the command *Circle* 20,20,40, then the order in which to stack our values would be . . .

```
LD A,20
CALL STACK-A
LD A,30
CALL STACK-A
LD A,40
CALL STACK-A
```

The circle routine resides at location #2D23 (11555). The value in H'L' again has to be saved. Thus to draw a circle of radius 40 with its centre at 100,100 our code would be

```
EXX             ;  Save H'L'
PUSH HL         ;
EXX             ;
LD A,#64        ;  Circle centre
CALL STACK-A    ;  Stack the values
LD A,#64        ;
CALL STACK-A    ;
LD A,#64        ;  Radius 40
CALL STACK-A    ;  Stack the radius
CALL #232D      ;  Draw the circle
EXX             ;  Restore H'L'
POP HL          ;
EXX             ;
RET             ;
```

Arc Drawing:

As you will probably know, the draw statement can take a third parameter to draw arcs. This I have left to discuss last as the format for passing the parameters to the arc drawing statement are very much like that of the circle command. All the required values are passed to the Rom routine #2394 (9108) on the calculator stack. Again the arguments are placed on to the stack in the same order as in Basic. *Draw* 50,60,1 would have its values pushed on to the stack in the order of :Stack 50 :Stack 60 :Stack 1. Again as in the circle command, we can use Stack A to place our arguments on to the stack for us.

In order to show the use of the above routines, type in the example in Table 1 and run it.

Table 1 – A program to draw a face. The Data statements contain the machine code program

```
10 ********************************
   * Plot – Draw – Circle – Arc *
   ********************************

20  PLOT:       EQU #22E5
    DRAW:       EQU #248A
    CIRCLE:     EQU #300D
    ARC:        EQU #2394
    STACKA:     EQU #2D28
    COORDS:     EQU 23677

30 ********************************

DEMO            EXX                 ;SAVE H'L'
                PUSH HL
                EXX
                LD A,#64            ;The Face
                CALL STACKA         ;Circle
                LD A,#64
                CALL STACKA
                LD A,#45
                CALL STACKA
                CALL CIRCLE

40              LD A,#44            ;The Eyes 1
                CALL STACKA
                LD A,#74
                CALL STACKA
                LD A,#10
                CALL STACKA
                CALL CIRCLE

50              LD A,#84            ;The Eyes 2
                CALL STACKA
                LD A,#74
                CALL STACKA
                LD A,#10
                CALL STACKA
                CALL CIRCLE

60              LD A,#64            ;The Nose
                CALL STACKA
                LD (COORDS+0),A
                LD A,80
                LD (COORDS+1),A
                LD BC,#2000
                LD DE,#101
                CALL DRAW
                CALL STACKA
                LD A,2
                CALL STACKA
                LD (COORDS+0),A
                LD A,#40
                LD (COORDS+1),A

70              LD A,#60            ;The Mouth
                CALL STACKA
                LD A#20
                CALL STACKA
                LD A,2
                CALL STACKA
                LD (COORDS+0),A
                LD A,#40
                LD (COORDS+1),A
                CALL ARC

80              LD BC,#7444         ;The Pupils
                CALL PLOT
                LD BC,#7545
                CALL PLOT
                LD BC,#7484
                CALL PLOT
                LD BC,#7585
                CALL PLOT

90              EXX                 ;Restore H'L
                POP HL
                EXX
                RET
```

Table 2 – Assembler listing of the progam to draw a face given in the Data statements in Table 1

```
SAMPLE PROGRAM
10  Border 0:Paper 0:Ink 5:Over 1:Cls
15  Clear 29999
20  For F=0 to 131:Read A
30  Poke 30000+F,A:Next F
40  Randomize Usr 30000
50  Goto 50
60  Data 217, 229, 217, 62, 100, 205
70  Data 40, 45, 62, 100, 205, 40, 45
80  Data 62, 69, 205, 40, 45, 205, 45, 35
90  Data 62, 68, 205, 40, 45, 62, 116
100 Data 205, 40, 45, 62, 16, 205
110 Data 40, 45, 205, 45, 35, 62, 132
120 Data 205, 40, 45, 62, 116, 205, 40, 45
130 Data 62, 16, 205, 40, 45, 205, 45, 35
140 Data 62, 100, 50, 125, 92, 62, 80
150 Data 50, 126, 92, 1, 0, 32, 17, 1, 1, 205
160 Data 186, 36, 62, 96, 205, 40, 45
170 Data 62, 32, 205, 40, 45, 62, 2
180 Data 205, 40, 45, 62, 64, 50, 125
190 Data 92, 62, 64, 50, 126, 92, 205
200 Data 148, 35, 1, 68, 116, 205, 229
210 Data 34, 1, 69, 117, 205, 229
220 Data 34, 1, 132, 116, 205, 229
230 Data 34, 1, 133, 117, 205, 229
240 Data 34, 217, 225, 217, 201
```

Table 3
The Basic Game Loop

Input	1	*Scan keyboard or other input services*
Calculations	2	*Perform calculations depending on the outcome of the input operations*
Output	3	*Update the screen display by printing the next animation cycle*

Gizmo gone bonkers? Can't get your thingy connected? Don't be afraid to tell us . . .

I'VE GOT THIS PROBLEM

. . . WITH A SECRET PROGRAM

I've a Spectrum +3 and a Multiface 3. I was playing Starglider **when I activated the Multiface. Suddenly a message appeared on the screen saying that it was an Amstrad test program that would corrupt discs.**

It then went through a series of tests, and I could check my joystick, colour, sound and cassette. It then asked for a test disc, and not wanting to damage any of my discs I reset the computer.

No matter how I've tried, I haven't been able to get the screens back again. What was it, and how is it triggered?
Steven Leighton
Tynemouth
Tyne and Wear

● What you've stumbled upon is a final test program hidden in the +3 for use in the factory. In the good old days, Spectrums were tested as they tumbled off the production line by plugging in a test cartridge, but to speed things up the program is now included in the computer.

I'm not sure how you got to it from the Multiface 3 though. To get to it normally, you should clear the Spectrum by pressing down the reset button, and then hold the BREAK key down while releasing the reset. You'll see a colour test-bar screen appear, which is there to help you tune in your TV. Now press the QAZPLM keys down simultaneously, and you'll find yourself in the test program.

Most of the Spectrums can be tested like this, but to finish off the job you'll need a special lead and test disc, which aren't generally available. But by putting in any write-protected disc, you can get to the end of the program. The computer will tell you that the RS232 and the disc tests have failed, but the rest of the results will be accurate.

One last thing. What does EAU do from the test-bar screen?

. . . WITH A RIGHT-HAND PORT

Recently I bought a second hand dk'tronics joystick interface with no instructions. I know the left port uses Kempston, but please can you tell me what the port on the right uses? Adverts in SU say it uses Sinclair and others say you use keys 6,7,8,9 and 0.

I'm having nightmares about interfaces slowly eating me alive. Help!
Andy Evans
North Yorks

● Um. Yeah. That's cool. Perhaps it might help if I was to reveal that 'Sinclair' and keys 6 thru 0 are in fact the same. Identical. The interface, like the original Sinclair Interface II, contains circuitry which converts the Joystick movements into electrical signals which the Spectrum is quite convinced comes from the keyboard. Easily fooled, the Spectrum.

Enjoy your kip.

. . . WITH CHANGING PERIPHERALS

I've got a Spectrum +, an Opus Discovery disc drive and a Brother HR5 printer. I'm thinking about getting a Spectrum +3, but don't want to have to change peripherals as well.

Will any of the above work with the +3, or will I have to buy new cables or new interfaces?
I Noble
Old Harlow
Essex

● The Brother will work, but you'll need a new cable to match the different printer part on the +3. The Opus is a goner, I'm afraid; you won't even be able to reuse the discs on the +3's drive.

. . . WITH WRITING A BOOK

I want to use my 48K to help me write books. Can you please advise me what I need to add to the Spectrum to get a good word processor and printer.

Most of the advertisements in SU don't have enough information to help me decide.
Roger Staten
Roberton
Biggar

● You're going to need three things; software, interface and printer. The software and the interface can be usefully combined in the Ramprint interface, which has both a standard printer port and some word-processing software built-in. Printers start at about 150, and if you're planning to get your books published you'd better get one with NLQ (Near Letter Quality) to keep editors happy. A nice one is the MicroPeripherals MP135.

That's the minimum configuration. You should also seriously consider a disc drive and a 'proper' keyboard, because the Spectrum 48K rubber wonder can be difficult to use when fast typing is needed.

A better way is to take advantage of the fact that many misguided Spectrum owners are buying new machines (a process mistakenly known as 'upgrading'), and thus a good number of complete systems are available at staggeringly low prices. A quick advert in your local paper should produce not only a good selection of computers with printers and software, but also a couple of local experts who will give you a couple of hours help 'getting started' in return for you buying their system.

. . . WITH A WONKY SIGNAL

Sometimes when I switch on the computer I get interference on the screen, and the reset button doesn't clear it. I have to hit the Spectrum or pull out the mains lead to fix the problem. This happens also when I'm playing a game, when I don't want to yank out the leads. What could be causing this?
Mark Ashworth
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire

● Had this happen to me. It turned out to be a bad solder joint inside the modulator, which resulted in the TV signal getting disconnected from the aerial lead now and again. It's a 10 minute job for someone with a soldering iron

. . . WITH FINDING ADAPTERS

I recently heard of a teletext adapter made by Volex called the TTX2000s, but I can't seem to find any adverts or info about them. Do you know anything about them and how they work?

Alan Harris
The Mount
York

● I remember the TTX! Just . . . The TTX looked like a VTX modem, and plugged into the back of the Spectrum. Plugging in a TV aerial produced Ceefax **and** Oracle **pictures. They worked quite well, apart from one horrendous design flaw – the power supply had an identical plug on it to the ZX power supply, and as it produced about three times the volts most TTX owners ended up with fried Speccies.**

Aside from that, they were reliable and usable, worked with Spectrums and 128s, and stopped being made some three years ago. Worth seeking out second-hand, if you're a careful soul.

(but Dr. Rupe has the answer)

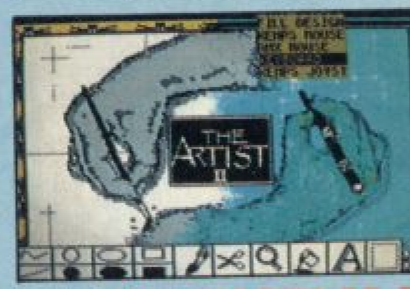
DATEL ELECTRONICS



GENIUS MOUSE 48/128/+2/3

- Now a top quality mouse system at a realistic price.
- Two button action.
- Full optical operation for superb accuracy.
- Comes complete with interface – just plug in and go!
- Compatible with Artist II (see offer)

ONLY £39.99 COMPLETE





ARTIST II ILLUSTRATOR

- Top quality graphics package for Spectrum.
- Described by Sinclair User as "the best artist program – bar none".
- Superb quality multi feature.
- Pull down menus.
- Windows icon driven.
- Font and sprite designer.
- Zoom mode.
- Supports many printers.
- Flexible cut & paste.
- This package has too many features to list – it is safe to say it has them all!

Special Offer – Buy Artist II & Genius Mouse system for only

£49.99

Please state Spectrum model when ordering.



ROBOTEK

- Robotics & model control made easy on Spectrum.
- 4 independently controllable outputs for relays, models, lights etc.
- 8 independent inputs for sensing etc.
- This is the product that the lego publication "Make and program you own robots" was based upon.
- Comes complete with cables.
- Easy to use.

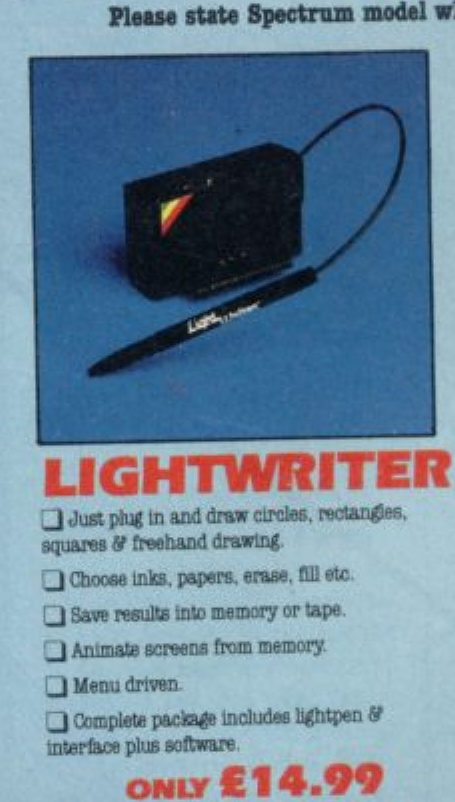
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EXTENSION CABLE

- Distance peripherals from your computer.
- 56 way.
- 6" extension.
- Top quality connections.

ONLY £8.99



LIGHTWRITER

- Just plug in and draw circles, rectangles, squares & freehand drawing.
- Choose inks, papers, erase, fill etc.
- Save results into memory or tape.
- Animate screens from memory.
- Menu driven.
- Complete package includes lightpen & interface plus software.

ONLY £14.99



INTERPRINTER

- Connect fullsize Centronics printers to your Spectrum.
- Complete with printer cable.
- Microdrive compatible.
- Tasword 2 compatible.
- Hires screen dump (Epson).
- Easy to use.

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- Brand new guaranteed Sinclair product.
- Simply plug in for 16K!
- Limited amounts at these prices.
- Send now.

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TWO WAY EXTENSION

- Allows two peripherals to be connected together (memory conflicts allowing).
- 8" long. 56 way.
- Top quality connections.

ONLY £10.99

+2 JOYSTICK ADAPTOR LEAD

- Allows standard 9 pin joysticks (Quickshot II/Turbo etc.) to be used on +2/+3 computers.
- Supports rapid fire models.

ONLY £2.99

+ 3 CASSETTE ADAPTOR LEAD

- Now you can connect your +3 to a cassette recorder.
- 2 ft. long.

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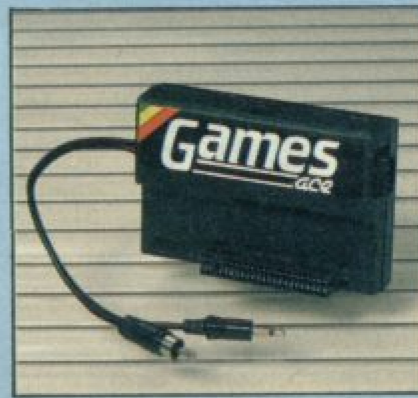
DATEL ELECTRONICS



NEW QUICKSHOT TURBO

- Complete with interface — plugs straight into Spectrum (all models).
- All the features of the best selling Quickshot II plus:
- Microswitch action for even longer life.
- Extra rigged construction.
- Superb styling.

ONLY £17.99 COMPLETE



GAMES ACE

- Joystick interface & sound booster.
- Accepts any 9 pin joystick for maximum compatibility (Kempston system).
- Plus — delivers sound from games through TV speaker (fully controllable).

ONLY £10.99

Complete with Quickshot II

£17.99

or complete with Quickshot Turbo

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DIGITAL SOUND SAMPLER

- Allows you to record any sound digitally into memory.
- Replay at variable pitch or with amazing effects.
- Forwards/backwards/with reverb/echo/flanging etc., etc.
- Fully menu driven.
- On screen keyboard and frequency plotting etc.
- Full 8 bit conversion.
- Complete hardware/software package.

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SNAPSHOT II

- Now you can backup your games to microdrive or tape.
- Simply press the button to "freeze" the program.
- Save to microdrive or tape.
- Special compacting techniques.
- Add pokes or peek program then restart.
- All backups restart from the point they were saved.
- Built in joystick interface (Kempston system).

£24.99 POST FREE



DUAL PORT JOYSTICK INTERFACE

- 2 Joystick ports — one Kempston type — one Cursor type.
- Accepts any 9 pin joystick including rapid fire types.
- Can also be used with two joysticks with games that allow simultaneous two player control.

ONLY £8.99



QUICKSHOT II

- The world's top selling joystick.
- Complete with interface.
- Plugs straight into Spectrum/Plus/+2 etc.
- Maximum compatibility (Kempston system).
- Auto fire/rapid fire.
- Stabilizing suction cups.
- Top & trigger fire buttons.
- Complete — no more to buy.

ONLY £13.99



ROBOTARM — Full Function with 5 Axis movement

- Explore the fascinating science of Robotics with this fantastic full feature Robot Arm.
- Human like dexterity — with 5 axis of movement it is so versatile it can manipulate and pick up any object as small as a paper cup or as big as a tennis ball.
- Easily controlled using 2 joysticks (any 9 pin type) or connectd to your Spectrum with our special Interface/Software to give Computer/Robotic control. (See Interface offer).
- Comes with complete range of accessories including: Standard Grip Jaws to mimic finger type grip; Magnetic Finger Adaptor with release mechanism; Shovel Attachment for materials handling; 4 Stabilising Legs for heavier lifting jobs.
- Uses 4 HP2 batteries (not supplied) to power motor movement.
- Self contained ready to use (except batts/joysticks).

ONLY £39.99

INTERFACE OFFER

- Unique Interface/Software package to allow you to Interface and control the Robotarm with your Spectrum.
- Train mode allows you to store and then repeat arm movement sequences.
- Computer and Robotic control is a major subject in schools and colleges — this is a unique introduction.
- Very easy to use.
- This Interface is not needed to be able to use Robotarm but it makes possible interfacing the the Robotarm/Computer.

ONLY £14.99



TH

The Academy is buzzing with life thanks to all the people who have registered. There are still a few vacant places, so if you would like to join this valiant band of apprentices then you'll find all the details you need in the April issue of SU.

I've had a few letters recently asking if I would disguise the hints that appear within these pages. Have you no willpower? I will disguise them in some way if I get enough requests, but, at the moment, it seems as if this is what the minority wants. Majority rules OK!

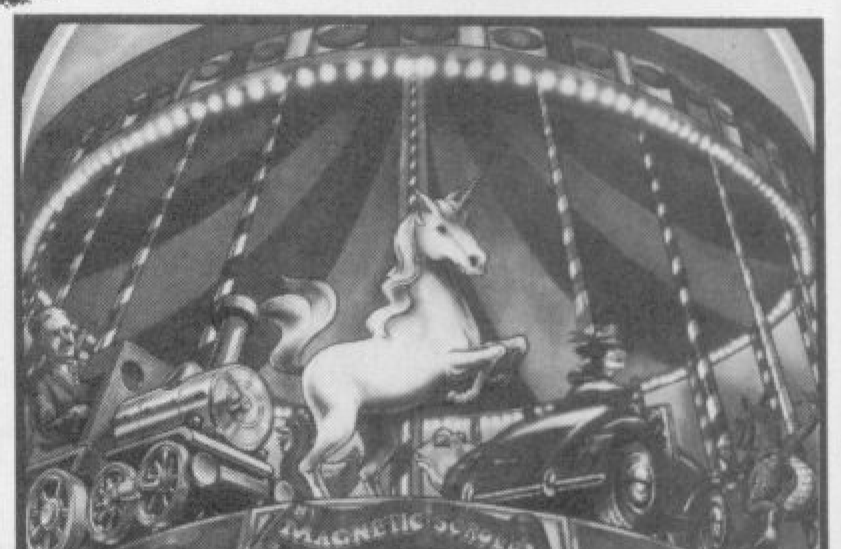
If you've recently sent in a request for help and are wondering why you haven't received an answer, just ask yourself one question: "Did I enclose an SAE?"; if the answer is negative then that's why you haven't heard anything.

Requests for help on older games will not be answered within the magazine, simply because they have probably been covered at some time in the past.

I bet you've never had an offer from a Balrog! Well I have, and it's an offer that everyone can benefit from. John Wilson of Zenobi Software is offering copies of his games for the princely sum of £1.49 each or two games on the same tape for £2.99. The games he is offering are the **Seeker of Gold** trilogy. Everydaytalesof a Seeker of Gold, Bulbo and the Lizzard-King and Fuddo and Slam. An offer not to be missed! The Balrog's cave is at 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs OL12 7NX.

I was pleased to see **Jinxter** appearing on the Spectrum with superb accompanying packaging. The Weekly for the Association of Registered Stochastic Executives (which I won't abbreviate), as the journal is referred to, contains all the information you will need to help you with the game. But, for those of you who like a bit of help to get you going, the following clues will assist.

You begin the game on a bus. Show the Inspector your ticket and wait until you pass a bus stop. Press the button



and wait until the bus comes to a standstill then leave the bus. You are now outside your house but your keyring is on the floor. You now have to risk life and limb to retrieve your keyring, but don't worry because help is at hand.

Once inside your house you must explore thoroughly. Examine everything you can think of. Collect as many objects as you can carry and don't forget that some objects can be used as containers which will increase your carrying power.

I especially loved the variety of different objects in this game.

It seems as if a lot of you are experiencing difficulties in the bank – don't we all!

Completed any adventures recently? Then why not share you knowledge with the rest of us!! Don't just write in asking for help, chuck a few hints my way and share them with everyone. I've been getting lots of queries about* Blizzard Pass, *and I don't have any information on this game. Has anyone got a detailed solution they could send in to this one? You'll be doing your fellows a great favour.

CRYSTAL ***Of Chantie.*** *In the Potion room, the tin contains a sleeping potion. Put the tin in the underground pool to send the scaly beast to sleep. The serum in the vat is plant food. Fill bottle with it (after drinking the wine), and put it on the plants to make them grow up the wall, so that you can climb up them.*

Don't reach over the Troll to get his sword, go back round the wall and approach him from the other side. Don't forget to search him, when you have killed him with his sword. He has a gold coin which you will need to bribe the butler in the Count's mansion.

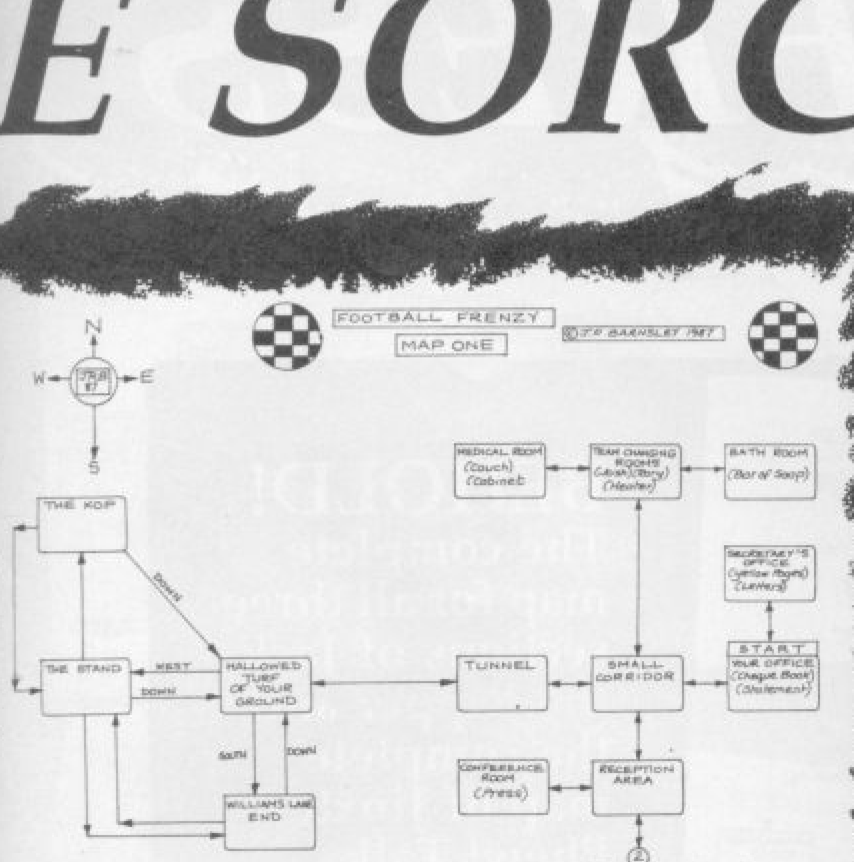
Read the book in the library, to become a match for the Count in swordsmanship. Take the book with you and put it on the plinth, before taking the crystal.

In the windowless room, to make the room revolve, ***Play Dead*** *on the piano. When you return with the crystal, play it in reverse to change the room back i.e.* ***Play Dead.*** *Take the rug with you when you leave through the trap door, and back in the moat, block the drain with the rug, to cause the water to rise and carry you back up to the top of the wall.*

JOURNEY ***To The Centre Of Eddie Smith's Head*** *has also been causing quite a few problems. Shoot the cat and examine the piece of paper which floats to the ground. It tells you to go to Room 106 in the pub and knock on the wall three times. If you have typed* ***Say Help*** *to the man at the hostel he will have given you a note to take to the landlord of the pub. You mustn't read the note but give it to the landlord and he will give you Room 107 for the night and take you upstairs. Look and go west, light torch, look, take small key, drop torch, go east, east, unlock door, north, knock three times, go north into the secret room and take Eddie's bank account book.*

HE SORCERESS

Stuck in a dungeon or helpless at the hands of fetid trolls? Write to The Sorceress SU Priory Ct, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



This bank, however, is in the land of Kerovnia in **Guild of Thieves.**

According to John Barnsley's solution, this is a random chance puzzle, and may take many attempts before you are successful. Follow the instructions exactly as written as the mynah bird may blow it for you at the wrong time!

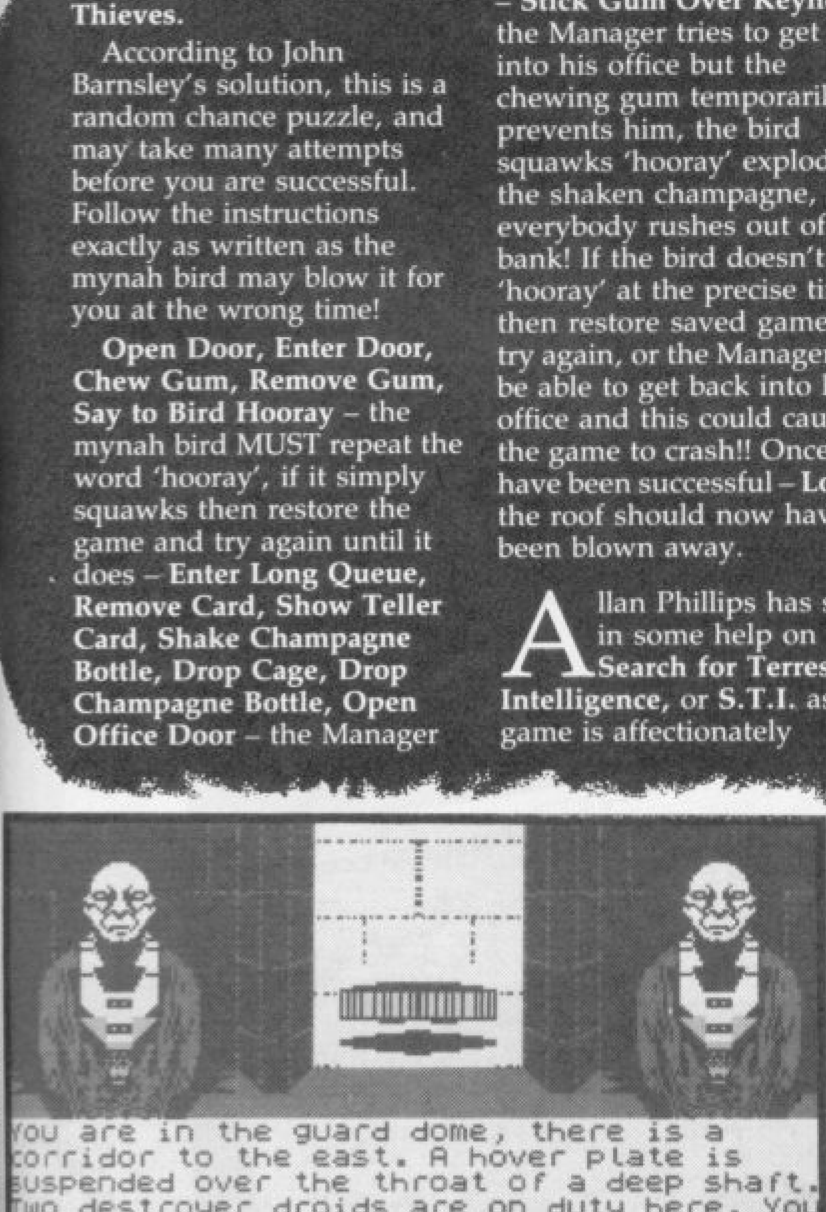
Open Door, Enter Door, Chew Gum, Remove Gum, Say to Bird Hooray – the mynah bird MUST repeat the word 'hooray', if it simply squawks then restore the game and try again until it does – **Enter Long Queue, Remove Card, Show Teller Card, Shake Champagne Bottle, Drop Cage, Drop Champagne Bottle, Open Office Door** – the Manager will now show you out, locking the door behind him – **Stick Gum Over Keyhole** – the Manager tries to get back into his office but the chewing gum temporarily prevents him, the bird squawks 'hooray' exploding the shaken champagne, and everybody rushes out of the bank! If the bird doesn't say 'hooray' at the precise time then restore saved game and try again, or the Manager will be able to get back into his office and this could cause the game to crash!! Once you have been successful – **Look** – the roof should now have been blown away.

Allan Phillips has sent in some help on **Search for Terrestrial Intelligence,** or **S.T.I.** as the game is affectionately referred to by most of you. The following information will be of use to you before you actually start to play the adventure 'proper'.

From the start in the plane's fuselage. You are wearing a parachute and can only take three more items with you. The crash helmet is not needed as you can make another one. You do need the glasses to read the eye chart. You could take the book as it has a crucifix in it but you can make one when you land. Only by reading the eye chart will you get the code to unlock the book. The briefcase and tape recorder are useless items. There is a way into the opticians without using the gold key, so leave it behind. All you really need to take are the walking stick, silver nuggets and glasses, then **Jump.**

All you have to remember is that the pink pussy will steal your walking stick but you can retrieve it later, and the handsome barman becomes a werewolf at night. To rid yourself of the werewolf you must type **Show Silver/Show Crucifix.** To make the crucifix you need to visit the chemist where you will find a bunsen burner which will melt the silver nuggets and leave you with a shiny new crucifix. One last word of warning before you start, don't touch the bell or the rope or you will be bitten and die!!

Got that? Right, off you go, you can play the game now.



WITTS END

This is the bit where I play Good Samaritan and prevent loads of suicides. Aren't I wonderful??

KAYLETH

Take the ball to Level Minus One, leave the elevator, down, AZAP CODE EPO to teleport, go south and you are sucked into a green spiral tunnel, down, down and put ball in hole, then examine technician.

RIGEL'S REVENGE

From the location where you find the screwdriver. GET SCREWDRIVER and put it in your satchel, then remove the belt and throw it at the light, wear your nighsights, GO EAST and GET RIGEL UNIFORM.

SAVAGE ISLAND PT 1

The sweat attracts the bear, to remove it go in the lake. Whenever the bear make s you nervous go back to the lake and have awash.Try to get the knife, block and bottle back to the tidepool before Hurrican Alexis strikes. You can't save the game whilst the hurricane is in full force and you may get killed randomly. Wait until you hear crash then GO EAST and get the log.

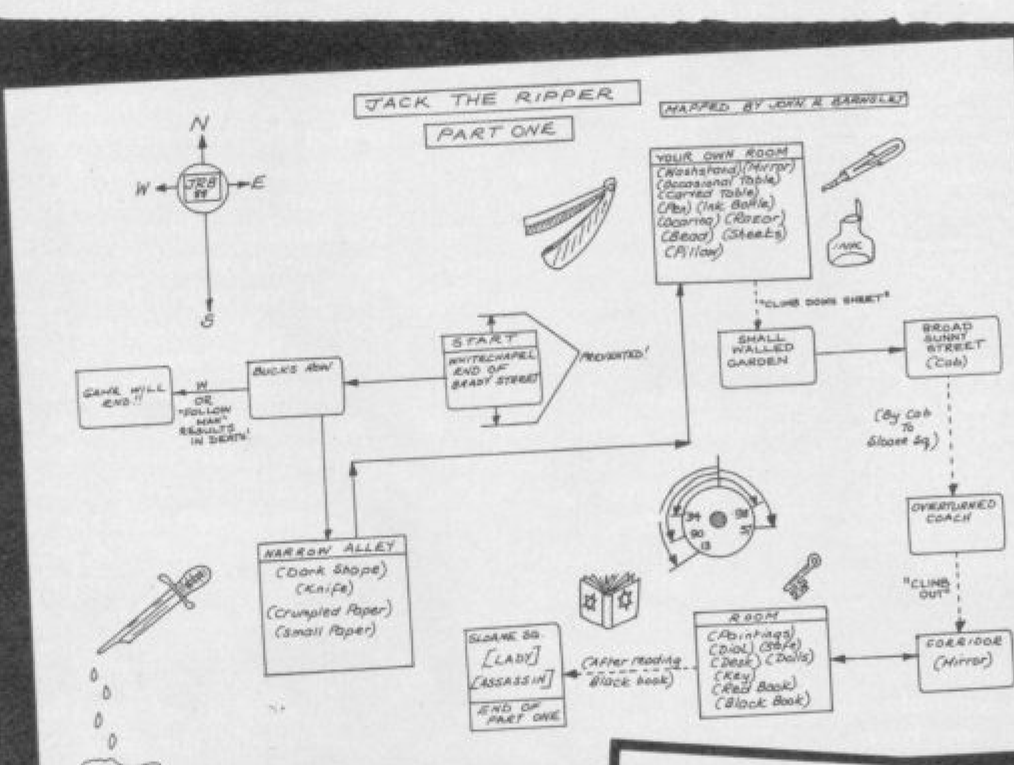
SHERLOCK

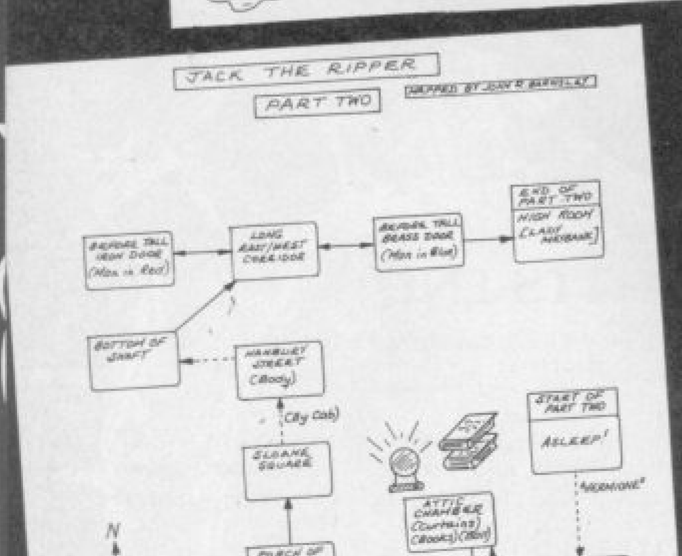
Closely examine the bank book. Examine the safe after midnight to avoid being shot. Go to Lestrade on Monday afternoon and tell him that the Major was in the opium den. Wearing the Chinese disguise, go to the opium den at night, the Major should arrive around midnight. Take off the disguise to get the Major to confess his addiction. Go to Slater Street and wait for Lestrade, the Major will now be cleared.

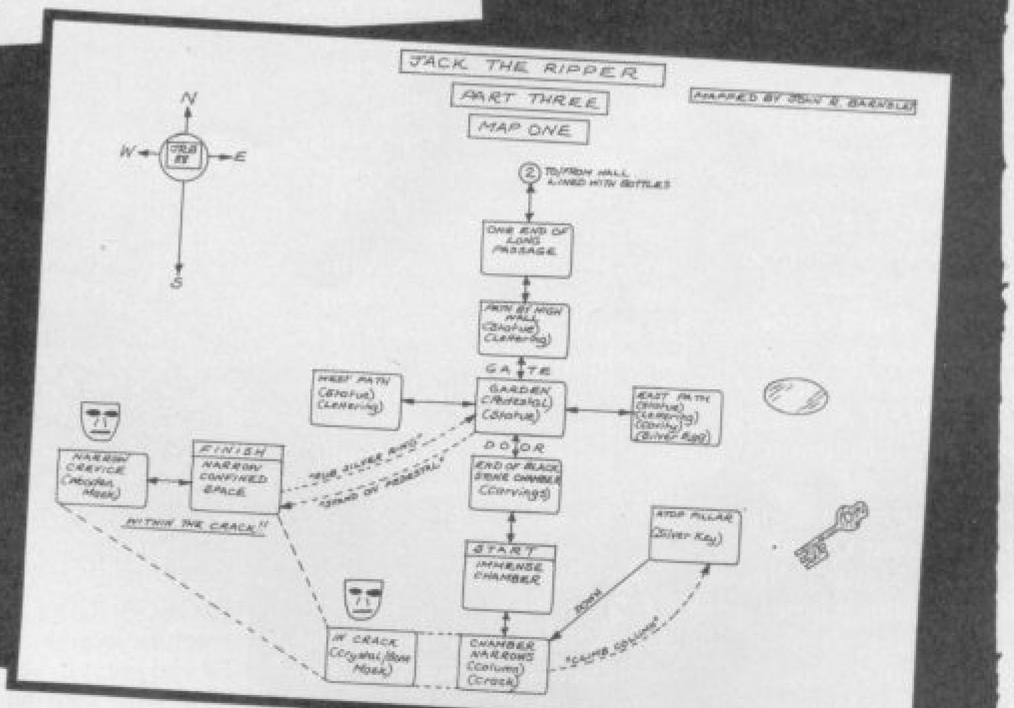
RESCUE FROM DOOM

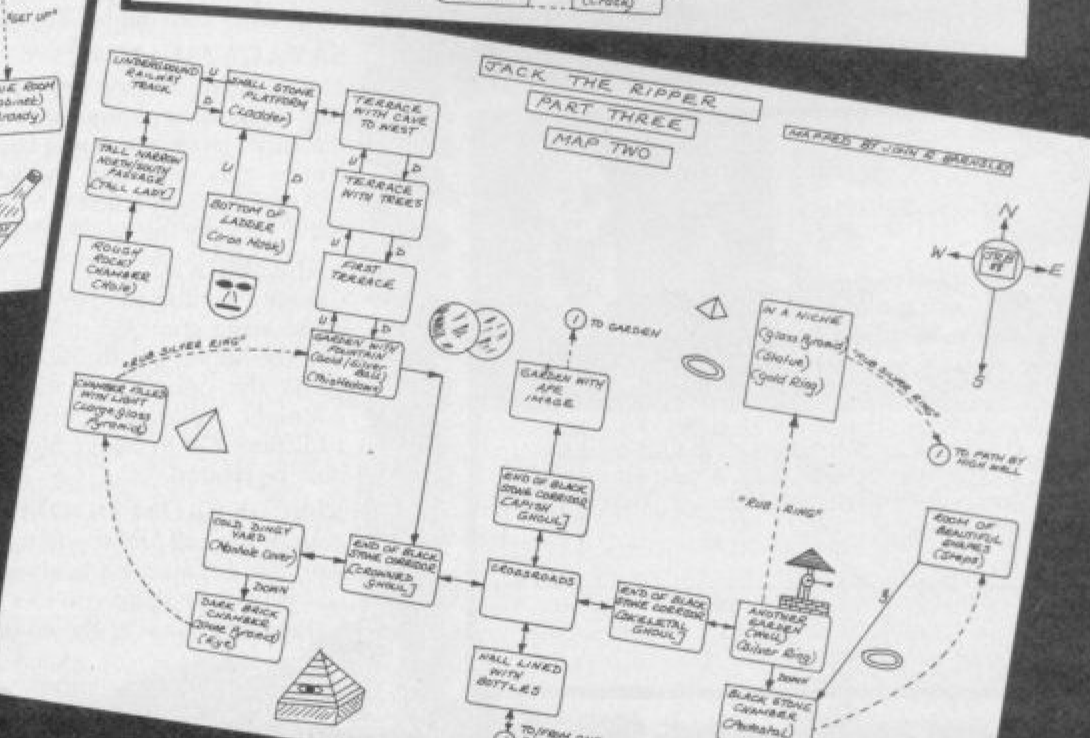
Bounce the ball and it will turn into a knife which will jump back into your hand. You need to sharpen the knife on a stone. Once you have sharpened the knife you can cut the rope in the Prison Cell. Take the rope and use it at the edge of the trench.

THE SORCERESS







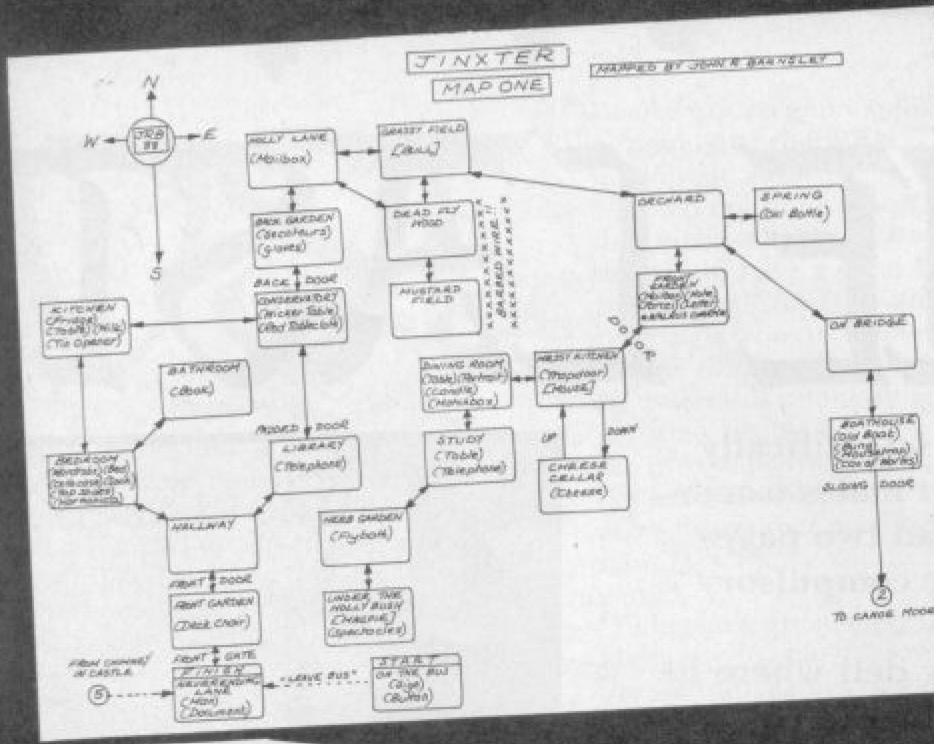


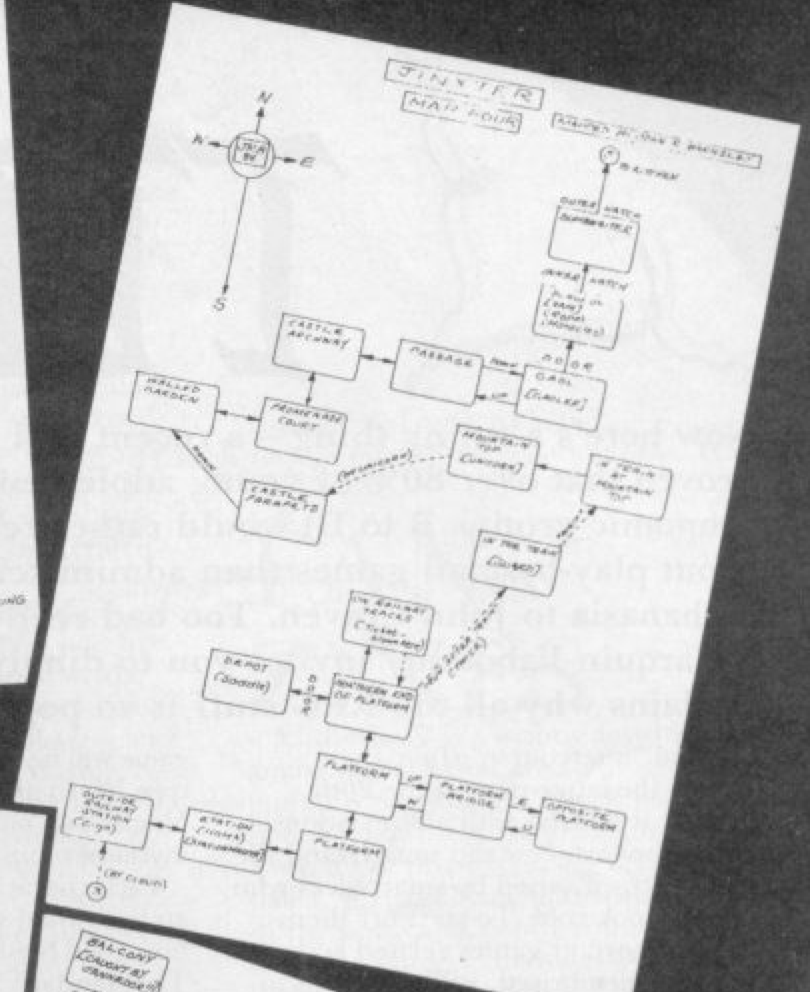
BEHOLD!

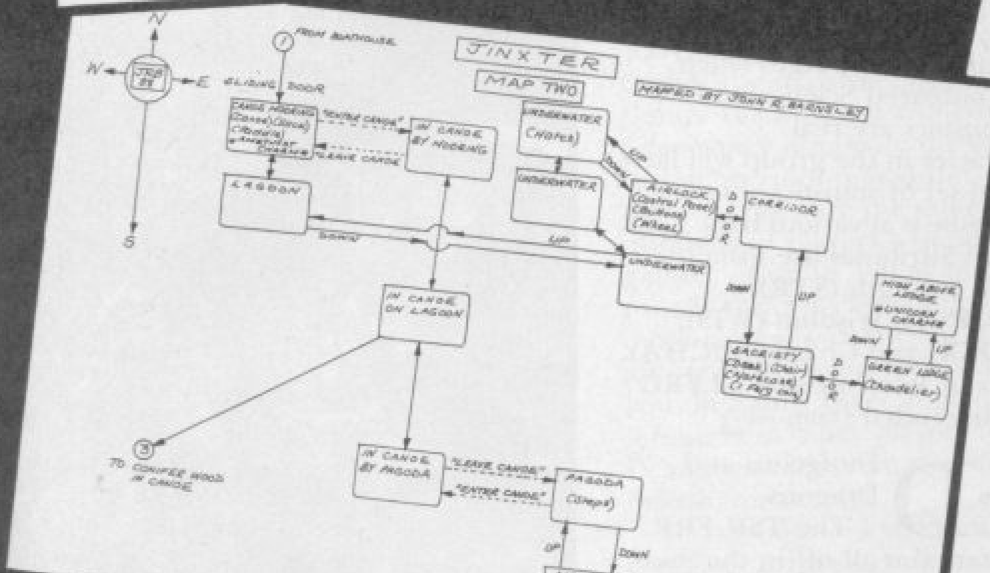
The complete map for all three sections of Jack the Ripper and the complete map of Jinxter! Phew! Talk about up to date . . .

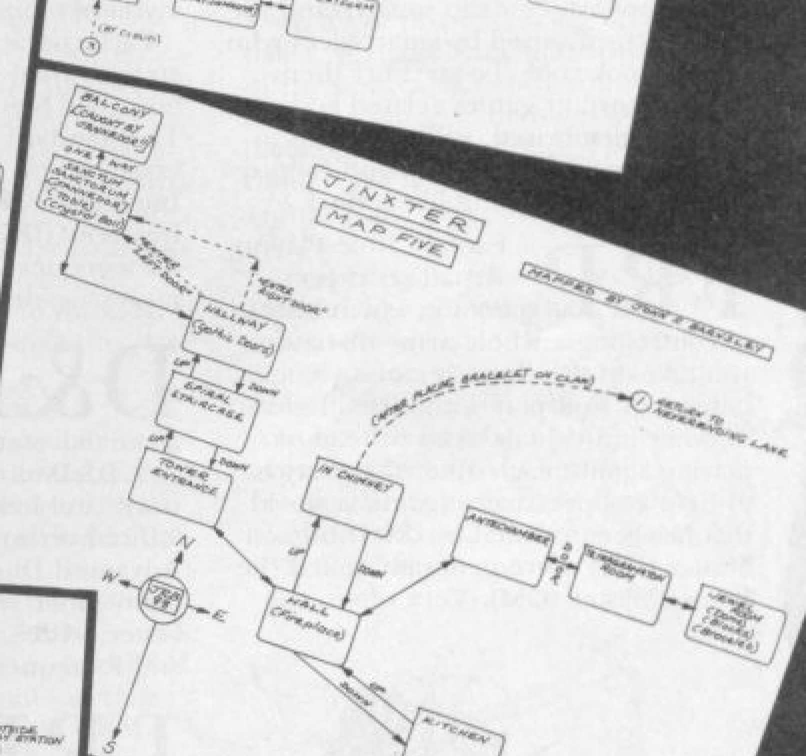
JACK THE RIPPER

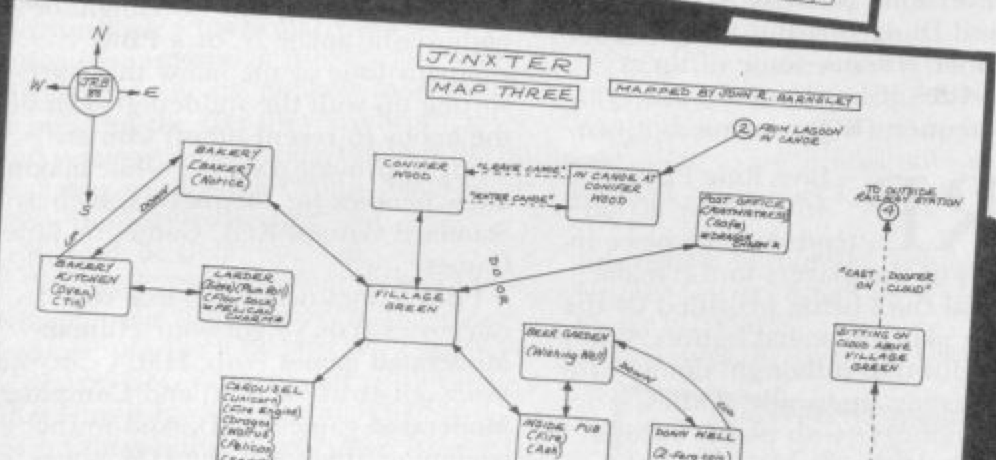
is still causing a lot of people a lot of problems – its sheer size for one thing but here, with objects, is the definitive guide











JINXTER

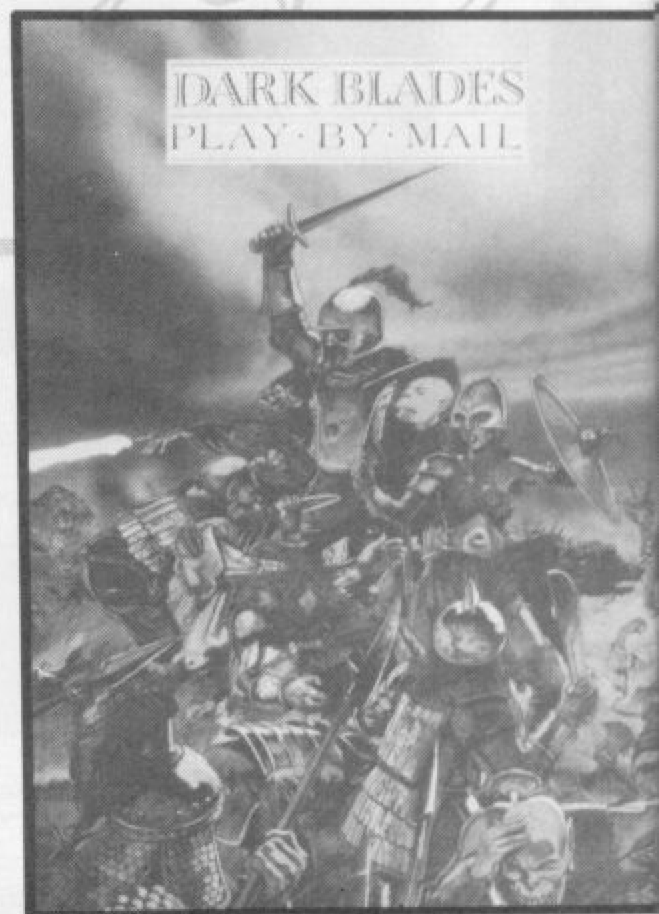
is big. And complicated but nothing beats SU for long! Uah!
THANKS TO JOHN BARNSLEY FOR ACE MAPMANSHIP

MAPS SPECIAL

THE LAST

Now here's a funny thing – a recent poll scientifically proved that over 80% of young adolescent males (socio-economic groups B to D) would rather read two pages about play-by-mail games than administer compulsory euthanasia to John Craven. Too bad really . . .

Tarquin Labotomy invites you to dingly dell where he explains why all the RPG stuff is so popular



Social "intercourse" (fnar fnar) during the latter-part of the 20th century is littered with abbreviations and acronyms. Few can understand the jargon, 'cos it's used by smart-alecs who want to look cool. To start off then, some important games related code, which if memorised, will allow you to converse with play-by-mail and fantasy freaks without looking like a dork.

FRP – Fantasy Role Playing Broad term for games in which instead of controlling a whole army or nation, you take on the character of an individual, and play with a small group of other individuals. And instead of playing against each other the party has to fight co-operatively against a world that has been created by the Dungeon Master **(DM)** more generally called the Games Master **(GM).** Very often, the game will be set in a swords and sorcery type alternative Middle Ages when Magick has outpaced Science and mythical monsters are real.

Each character in the group will have an individual set of statistics showing how good he/she is at various basic skills. The standard attributes are usually variations on Strength **(STR),** Intelligence **(INT),** Wisdom **(WIS),** Dexterity **(DEX)** and Charisma **(CHA).** To a greater or lesser extent, all **FRG** games are descended from –



D&D Dungeons and Dragons The **TSR FRP** game that started it all off in the mid-70's. **D&D** took the wargaming world by storm and has since spawned many 'official versions' (such as AD&D – Advanced Dungeons and Dragons) and many other systems, some of them better – **C&S** (Chivalry and Sorcery) and Runequest **(RQ)** to name but two.

LRP – Live Role Playing In **FRP** the action tends to take place in the heads of the players in the main, with visual clues being provided by the odd floor plan and metal figures. When it comes down to it though, doing it for real – dressing up in silly clothes, bashing monsters with plastic swords (preferably in the dark) is the real Macoy.

The trouble with both **FRP** and **LRP** is that you need to get large groups of people together to make a good game. You all have to turn up at the same place at the same time, having arranged all this beforehand. Plus, certainly with **FRP**, you tend to play with people you already know, within your own geographical area. If you have aspirations outside of your home town, it looks like you might be interested in –

PBM Play-by-Mail Yes, at last we come to **PBM** games. And what are they? Don't be a pillock! It's any sort of game that is played by post – usually through a central organising **GM** who might be an enthusiastic amateur, or a **PBM** company (one of the many that have sprung up with the sudden growth of the hobby in recent times) who are trying to provide a service while making a few pennies for themselves, such as Standard Games, KGC Games or Jade Games.

PBM games neatly fall into two categories. You've got your **Human Moderated** games (yup, **HM** – eat your heart out Iron Maiden) and **Computer Moderated** games **(CM).** And in the beginning, there was the **HM** game.

Any potted history of **PBM** first has to mention **Chess.** Gamesplayers have been playing **Chess** by post for many, many years. It has a proper worldwide organisation, is pretty formal and – unless you're into **Chess** – pretty boring. The next game to capture the imagination of assorted loons, though, was **Diplomacy.**

I have to register an interest here. **Diplomacy** is the most perfect board game that ever existed, in my not so humble opinion. Set in pre-WW1 Europe, it's a game with mechanics about as difficult as Draughts – but when you play it with six other people it becomes a game of human complexity. You have to judge the personalities of the other players. Make alliances. Lull

POST

your friends into a false sense of security. And then betray them ruthlessly, somehow convincing them that you had no alternative and it was probably their fault anyway. Anyone with three functional brain cells and an imagination is going to go bananas when they play the game – so if you've never done it, off you go and get a set right now. It is the perfect game to play by post and demonstrates the advantages of doing so.

Firstly, to play **Dippy** well, you must have seven players (to start with . . . the numbers soon whittle down). So you have to grab six other sentient beings who share your passion and get them to stay in the same place for eight hours or so. Tricky. Particularly if your Mum is a pacifist.

Also, the fact that you are playing with people that you already know (probably – since when did you last invite some strange dude in off the street to have a quick bash at dominating Europe) – brings prejudices into the game. The fact that Smithers Minor has not yet returned your treasured Mel and Kim memorabilia, and his brother (Smithers Morris) force fed you with a particularly poisonous radioactive isotope in Biology last week, means that you are unlikely to ally with them. And the fact they are brothers and smarmy swots means that it is likely that they will form a strong alliance from the very beginning and consequently clean up.

Not very 'realistic' when it comes to a simulation of **Diplomacy,** is it? Now imagine playing it by post. You apply to a central **GM,** probably an enthusiast that runs a fanzine in which he/she prints the results. In exchange for a few quid they fit you in to the next game start, and you find yourself playing in a game with six total strangers, probably living all round the country, sometimes the world! Problem number one solved. And as you can only communicate by post (sometimes phone as well) you never know who is talking to who and what they are saying. Plus the written word opens up all sorts of counterfeiting possibilities for those with access to a photocopier . . .

It's also possible to play adaptations of existing board games or **RPG. Monopoly** by post??? Yup, it's been done, **Railway Rivals** too – and I was once involved in a Napoleonic wargame by post that involved writing down the orders of well over 100 separate pieces. Blagh! Not recommended, but you have to remember that **PBM** is infectious and maddingly addictive.

You'd not think that **RPG** by post was that interesting – but I was lucky enough to have a great **GM** called Jim Botten in a **C&S** (Chivalry and Sorcery) campaign who, in response to my outline orders would send back the equivalent of a fantasy novella telling me what happened! You can't expect the pros to provide that sort of service – but commercial **PBM** companies can offer things that no single enthusiast can. That's big computer moderated games.

There's a great variety of Computer Moderated Games – Fantasy jobs like the stalwart **Tribes of Crane,** or the newer (and who knows, better – see review next month) **Dark Blades,** and Sci–Fi bashes such as **Star Master, New Order,** the massively popular KJC Games **It's a Crime** and **Global Supremacy** dominate the scene. Although rules may differ massively, the principles are the same. You get big numbers of players – depending on the game, but up to 400 or more. You usually control a kingdom, planet, party or whatever, with certain characteristics and objectives and orders are coded to you on a turn sheet, together with messages to other players to the **GM.** Deadlines vary from two weeks to one month, on average.

To start off you send off to a company for a start-up kit, which will contain the rules book, and maybe a few free turns. After your free turns have run out, you are usually talking in the region of £1.50 per turn.

These big games, given the diversity of humanity that is playing them, can be a real scream – and if you're into **PBM,** you ought to try at least one. So that's it for now – the idiot's guide to **PBM.**

Addresses: Standard Games, Arion House, Station Road, Kings Langley, Herts WD4 8LF.
KJC Games, PO Box 11, Cleveleys, Blackpool, Lancs FY5 2UL.
Jade Games, Freepost, Southsea, Hants PO4 0BR.



FAN-ZINES

Enthusiasts like writing fanzines – amateur mags that are put together by gung-ho part-timers. And it has to be said, a lot of them are great fun to read. Even if the prose style doesn't suit your pallet, they do bring across the flavour of the particular hobby you might be interested in. All the mags below include some element of **PBM,** even though not all are pure amateur. If you know of any good ones, drop us a line.

Concepts, 11 St Silas Square, Lozells, Handsworth, Birmingham B19 (95p/issue).
Totally Zane, Linda Little, 11 Waple Road, Redhill RH1 5HE (75p/issue).
Amulet, 7 Havering, Castlehaven Road, London NW1 8TH (75p/issue).
Intellect Devourer, Dave Hughes, 104 Highcliffe Road, Wickford, Essex SS11 8JX (75p/issue).



GET INTO CRIME!

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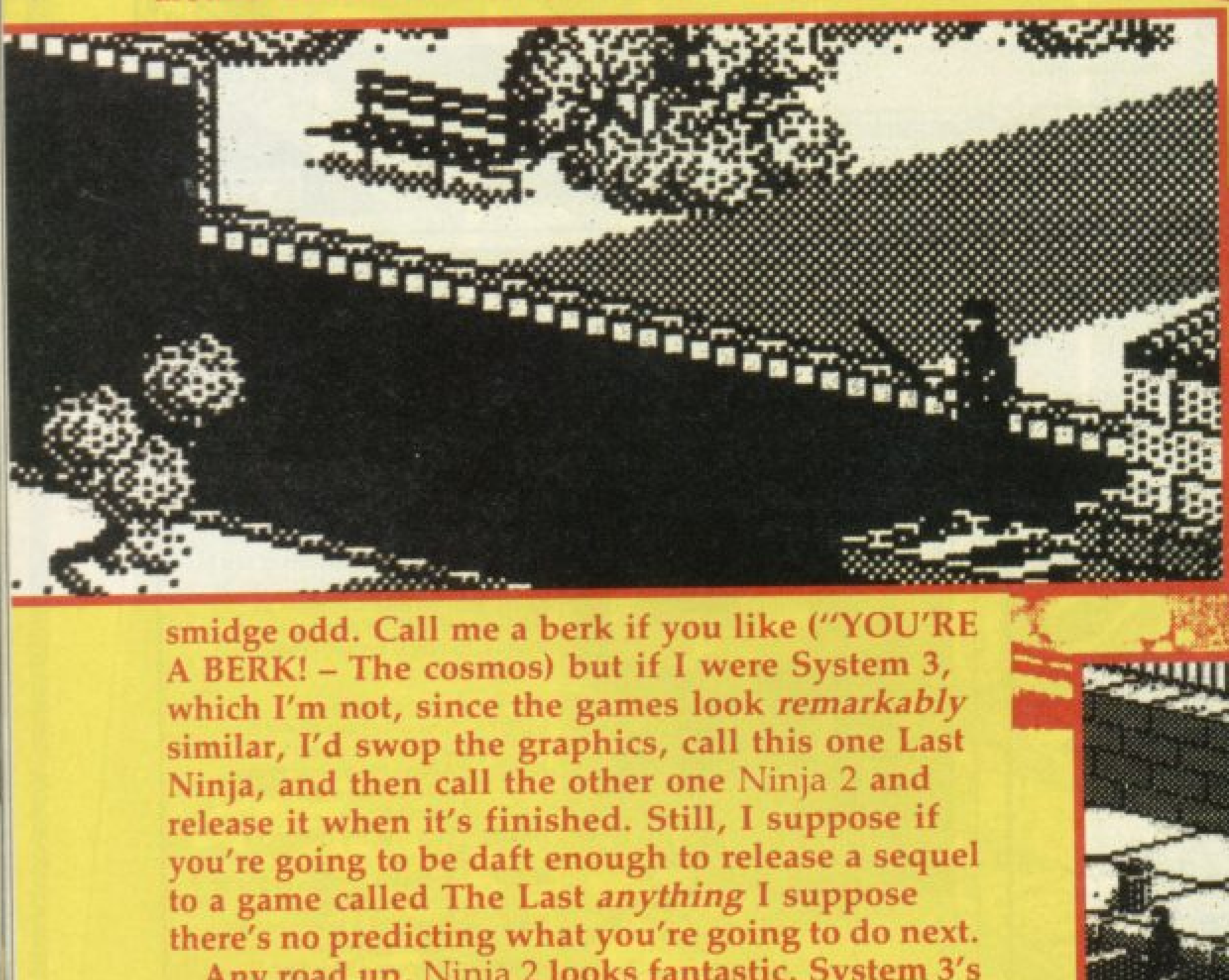
MEGA PREVIEW

OK, I admit that, in the past I've been, well, wrong about certain things. One thing, however, of which I am 100% sure is that, as some of the greatest minds have suggested, "It's a funny old world".

Proof? All right – let me pick at random a game from the Previews this month which will prove the funnyness of said World. Let's take this one here. The one with the little black figures in 3-D. What's it called? The Last Ninja 2. What's it the sequel to? Why, the Last Ninja of course. Nothing too "funny" so far.

How was the Last Ninja received? It wasn't. It still hasn't been finished. It might come out around Christmas. Now, this strikes me as a

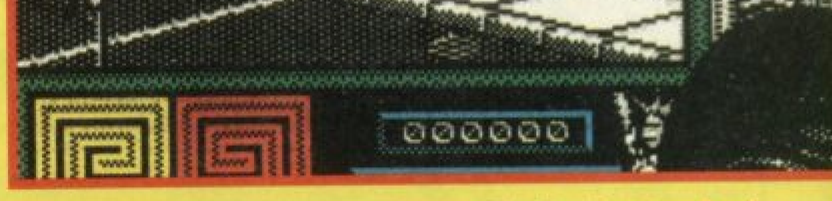




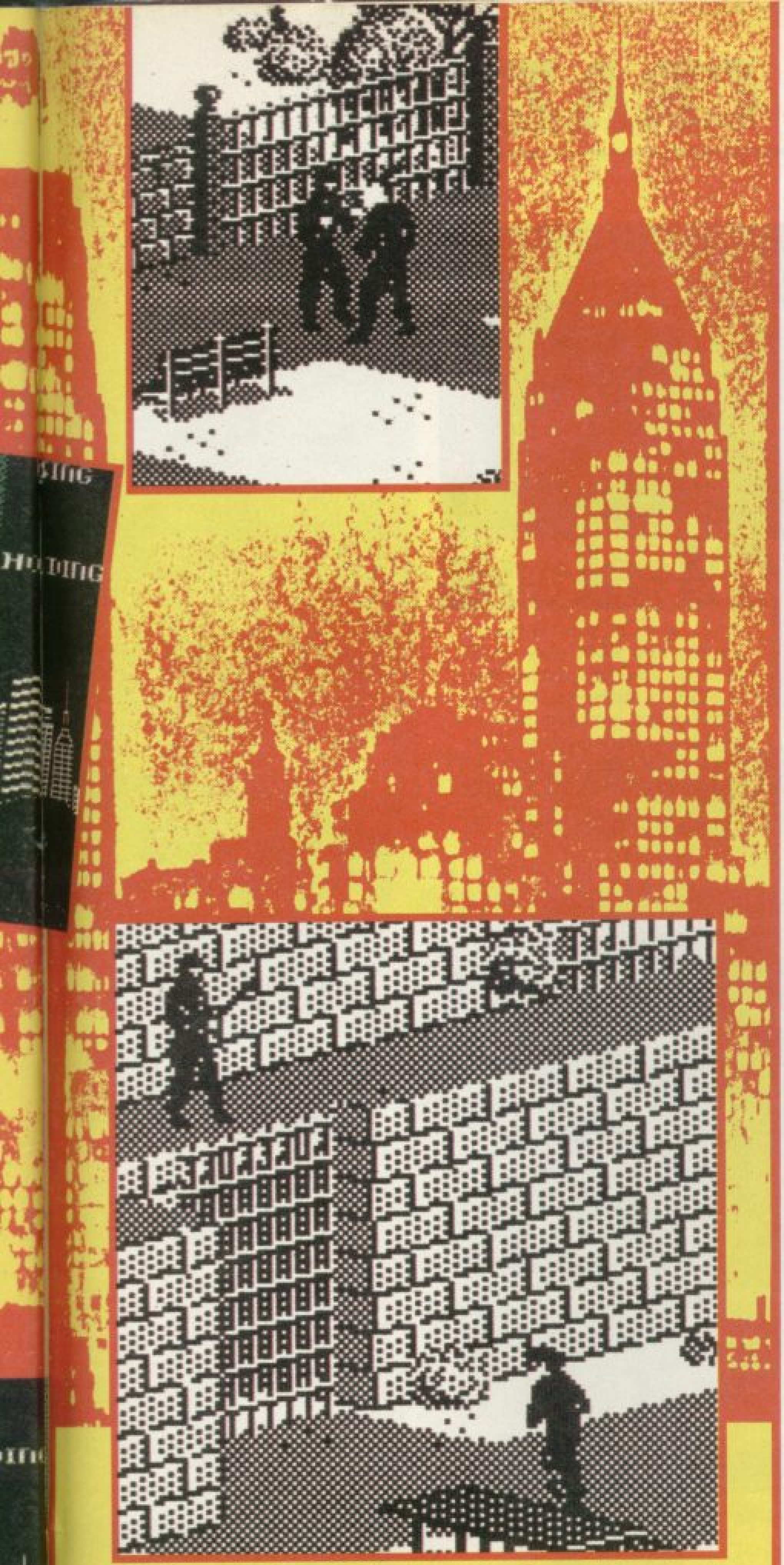
smidge odd. Call me a berk if you like ("YOU'RE A BERK! – The cosmos) but if I were System 3, which I'm not, since the games look *remarkably* similar, I'd swop the graphics, call this one Last Ninja, and then call the other one Ninja 2 and release it when it's finished. Still, I suppose if you're going to be daft enough to release a sequel to a game called The Last *anything* I suppose there's no predicting what you're going to do next.

Any road up, Ninja 2 looks fantastic. System 3's Tim Best and Mev Dinc – the main man behind Knightmare – popped round the other day and showed us Mr Ninja running around in a totally great animated style, cracking bad guys under the chin, somersaulting around the screens, collecting objects and generally being very impressive.

This game is set in present-day Manhattan with you – in black Ninja matching hood'n'trouser set – prowling the streets in search of the illusive Mr Big. It's the first game – as far as I can recall – to combine an Ultimate-style view of locations with Exploding-Fist fight scenes. As a result, the



combat scenes are extremely realistic; instead of just being able to walk up to your opponent, you can literally run rings around him, attacking from the side and the back. Another feature which promises to make life more interesting is the way you can pick up, manipulate and use objects. It's



and expansion of the ideas in Target Renegade – instead of finding a weapon on the floor, and being able to use it instantly, you'll have to make yourself a set of chucks from the most unlikely objects.

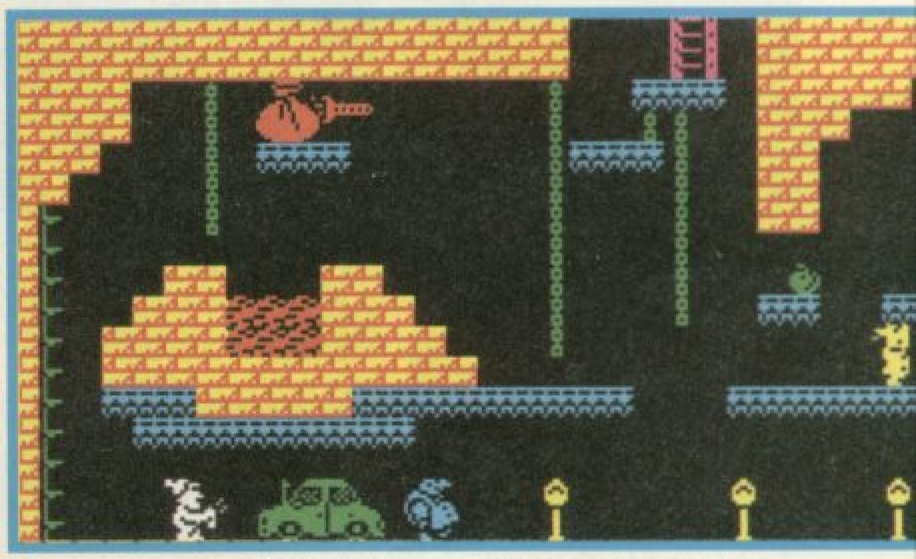
As well as things which you use to clobber people, there are puzzles to be solved and lots of places to explore. At the moment, it looks like it's going to be about six loads long – less for 128K owners – and we'll be very surprised if it isn't BRILLIANT! But then, as it hasn't actually been finished yet . . .

Streetdate: June.
Price: £8.95



PREVIEW 2

CHUBBY GRISTLE



Hands up anyone who didn't think this looks uncomfortably similar to Jet Set Willy? Come on, come on. Don't be shy. None? Ah, yes, there's one lurking at the back. And what's your name, sonny? Grand Slam Entertainment. Double barrelled eh? Humph.

Well, what do you think it looks like? No it doesn't look like a new concept in games design, actually, does it? No. It looks like a very very old games style that really does look pretty tired these days and ought at least to have some interesting new features.

So what an earth are you doing releasing something like this? Eh? Oh, ?? ??? then. Tell the class what happens then? What do you mean you're too embarrassed? Well, I'm glad to hear it. If I had a game that involved playing the part – fnar – of a fat traffic warden called Chubby Gristle and running around trying to book enough came to earn your bonus before tea-time when you can have a big scoff, I'd keep pretty quiet about it too.

Streetdate: June.
Price: £7.95

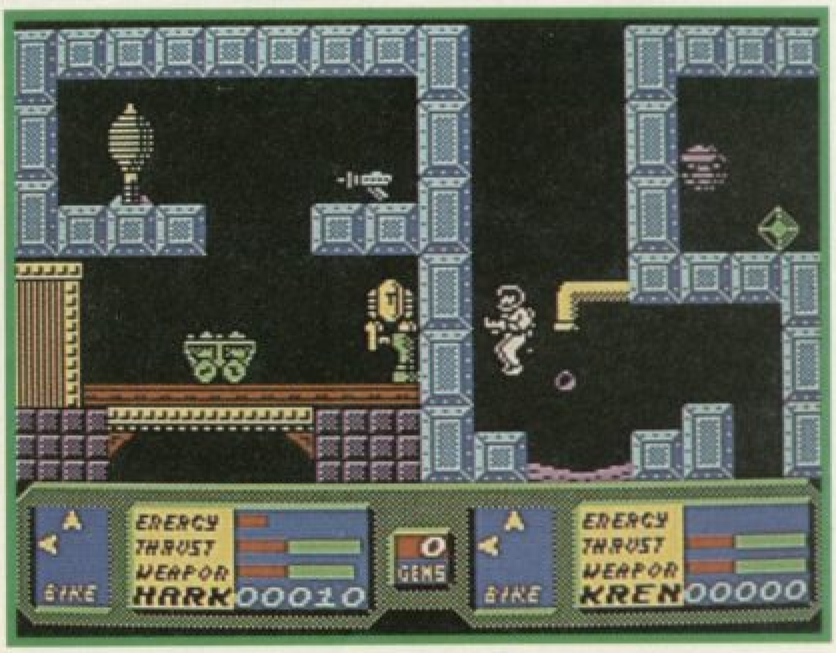
BLOOD BROTHERS

Hark! Kren! Not the sounds of Graham Taylor clearing his throat after one of his disgusting cigars, but the names of the twin heroes of Gremlin's forthcoming space arcade adventure Blood Brothers.

The planet Sylonia is rich in minerals – or it was, before the horrid Scorpions attacked. Now the valiant brothers must scour the surface of Scorpis and penetrate its automated defences, searching out the gems to return them to their native planet.

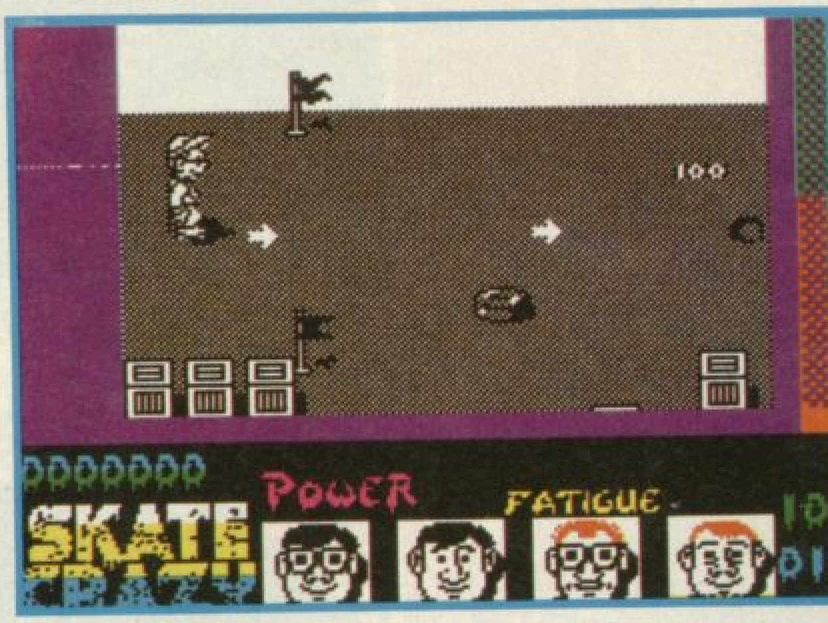
Using jet packs, hoverbikes and various weapons hidden around the planet, the two brothers must regain the treasures before they're caught by the scorpions (ooh! Nasty!). Looks like fun.

Streetdate: April.
Price: £7.99, £12.99 disc

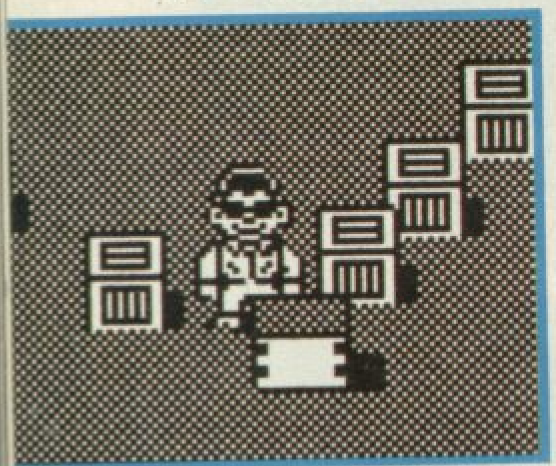


PREVIEW 3

SKATE CRAZY



I've often thought that if you sawed a skate board in half, put wheels on both bits and strapped them to your feet, it would really catch on. You could call them, ooh, roller skates. Obviously the same idea has occurred to someone



else, 'cos Gremlin has come up with **Skate Crazy** which is all about them, and looks spiffy.

It features a lovable mannequin called Freddy who has to skate around jumping ramps, passing between cones, avoiding oil patches and dodging oil cans. Each course has to be completed within a time limit, and if you think it sounds like **720°** you might be right. The perspective view is slightly different, but the scrollerama background and skatey-jumpey characters are even better if you ask me, which we'll have to assume you have.

Streetdate: June/July
Price: £7.95

FURY



Now, you can call me a soft-topped carrot if you like, but I'm not entirely convinced of the brilliantness of Martech's new thang, The Fury.

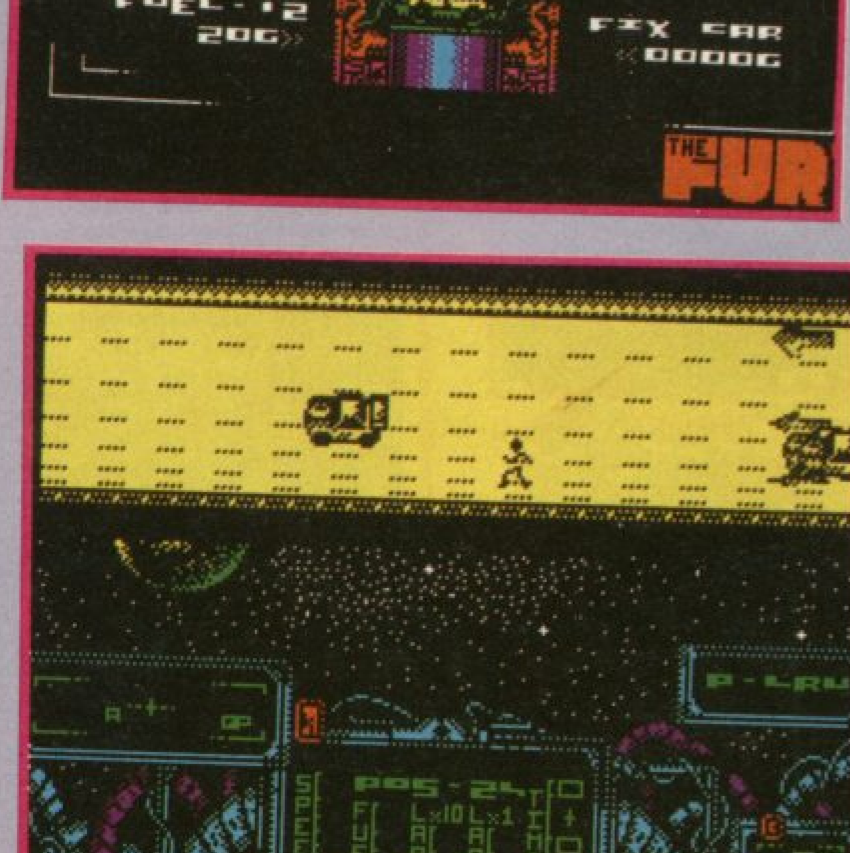
The advert and box artwork has been produced by a bloke called Rodney Matthews, who is "famous" for doing loads of album covers for heavy metal bands. OK, everything fine so far.

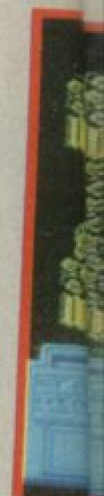
The plot is a concoction of Rollerball, Mad Max **and** Clockwork Orange, **all monstrous cars and unrealistic speeds, racing around a track for a future civilisation's entertainment.**

All sounds great, and the selection process of your vehicle looks even better. You guide an ultra-smooth cursor around, highlighting car-enhancement options and modifications etc. Everything has a price, and you can only purchase a car within your price bracket. So there's scope for wheeling and dealing and working your way up the social-scale for stock-car drivers. You get the feeling that this is all leading up to something fantastic.

Which is why you might be a smidge, er, "bemused" by the game screen, which looks, oh lord. Look. Look at the picture and I won't say anything else, all right?

Streetdate: July
Price: £8.95





Calm down, calm down. Yes. You've just been playing Hyper Active, **haven't you? It's fantastic, isn't it? Easily the best game you've ever seen on a cover-tape, and a whole lot better than a lot of the full-price stuff around at the moment. Well if you can tear yourself away from the screen for a few minutes, you might like to hear what we know about** Gutz, **which is the new game from the people who created** Hyper Active, **Special FX.**

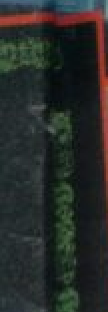


Apparently – hem hem – the whole squishy idea was thought up by Andy Rixon, who does all the graphics for the Fexxers (as they aren't called by anyone) after having a dead spooky experiment "done" on him (It was a Barium Meal Test, which involves swallowing a mildly radioactive paste in order to examine the digestion apparatus – "Doctor" G. Taylor). Judging by the plot, Andy has either undergone something



ALZ





pretty awful or is totally barmy. I mean, if you had hundreds of alien antibodies scurrying around and being all horrible on top of a little man running about shooting everything in sight in your stomach, wouldn't you be a little worried?

Well, as you can see, it's a semi-3-D sort of thing – a bit like the early sections of Platoon, and involves a lot of shooting. You can tell it involves a lot of shooting because you've got a BIG gun.

Anyway, the storyline goes like this: You've been swallowed by an enormous alien, and if you hang about, you're going to get digested. The aim of the game? Work your way up the digestive system, up through the tummy, up and around all the tubes and finally out of the mouth of the big beast, shooting and killing things on the way.

Looks fab.

Streetdate: June/July
Price: £7.95



ALTERNATIVE WORLD GAMES

PREVIEW 4

Aren't you sick to death of playing all these **World Winter Super Olympic Test Challenge** games? We are. Sick up to the blummin' teeth begorra an' no mistake.

So it's a jolly good show that Gremlin have decided to take a rather cynical look at the whole business with **Alternative World Games.**

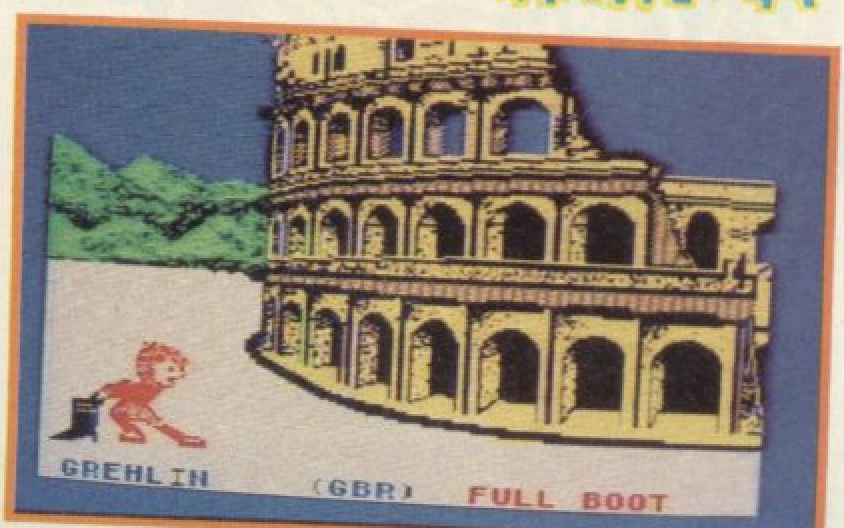
None of the teeth-clenching, posturing competition found in the absurdly serious games here. No way. Just a bit of a laff.

The events are largely comic in nature, like the pillow-fight, sack race and pogo-ing.

There are eight events in all, and the whole thing will probably turn out to be just as likely to cause all the awful rows and punch-ups when everyone goes all sulky when they lose. Typical.

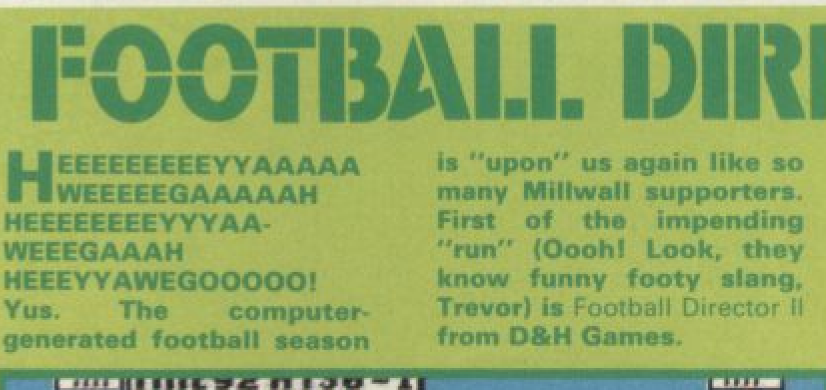
High novelty value.

Streetdate: June/July
Price: £7.99



FOOTBALL DIRECTOR II

HEEEEEEEEEYYAAAAA WEEEEEGAAAAAH HEEEEEEEEYYYAA-WEEEGAAAH HEEEYYAWEGOOOOO! Yus. The computer-generated football season is "upon" us again like so many Millwall supporters. First of the impending "run" (Oooh! Look, they know funny footy slang, Trevor) is Football Director II **from D&H Games.**



Now, the first one didn't fair too well in the SU reviews stakes, attaining a relatively naff 4 stars. Still, what with all the fab features included on the sequel, I'm sure it will be a whole lot better. The screenshots look a bit more promising, too.

Some of the more interesting features include crowd violence, police bills and a history page, whatever that might be.

It's only going to be available for 128K owners and will probably keep Tony Dillon and people of his ilk busy forever (let's hope).

Streetdate: June
Price: Unconfirmed

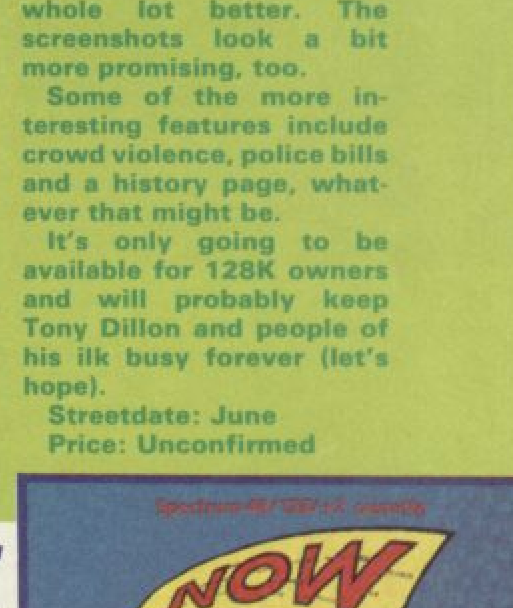
NOW GAMES 5

Phew-er! Now here's a sexy little collection, if ever we saw one. It's called Now Games 5 **and it's jam-packed with six scorching sizzling saucy software stars from not-too long ago.**

It's not due out for a month or so, but just to get your whistles whetted, we thought we'd give you a sneaky peek through the bedroom keyhole at them.

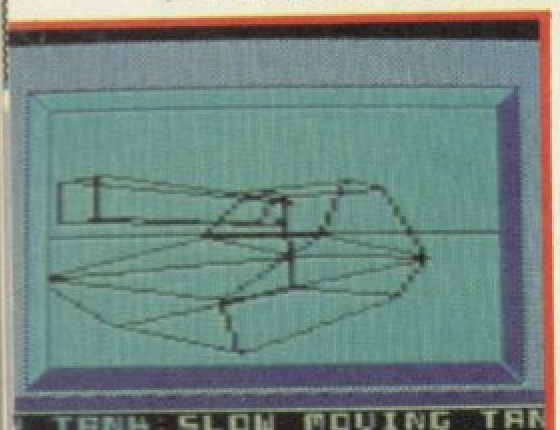
There's International Karate, Hacker II, Prohibition, Rebel, Street Hassle **and** Kat Trap, **all of which were at least moderately fab, and so the combined package, by the law of averages, must be worth at least a bit of attention.**

Streetdate: June
Price: £9.95



IN THE WORKS

Well you can make me sit on a howitzer shell if this isn't a picture of **Arctic Fox** from Electronic Arts, the American 'giant.' And doesn't it look nice? Nice to see everything's running on-time at EA. It was only October last year that it was "coming along quite well." In case you've forgotten what it's all about



(or have gone into a coma through old-age in the meantime) I'll tell you.

Aliens have invaded the Arctic circle and are building a big machine which will completely screw up the atmosphere and kill everyone on earth, making lots of room for their funny alien goings on.

So you get in your super duper sci-fi tank and go and blow everything to bits.

It's a bit like **Battle-Zone** on ice really.

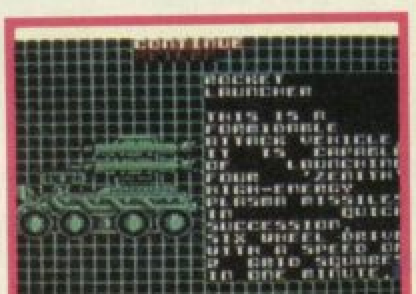
Well, it's not very much In the Works, but we thought this would be one of the more appropriate places to tell you about the impending demise of Piranha.

Yup, the time has come for the company who brought you **Rogue Trooper** (Crap), **Trap Doors 1 & 2** (Fab), **Flunky** (Hopeless), **Yogi Bear** (Spiffing) and **Mr Weams and the She Vampires** (Dire) among others to your Spectrum to mosey on up to the big press-launch in the sky.

Macmillan Books, the enormous publisher that founded Piranha a couple of years ago have decided that computer software is not their cup of tea, so it looks like **Judge Death** and **Halo Jones** will never see the light of day, which is a shame really, as the law of averages suggests that at least one of them would be pretty good.

No room for a Mystery Screenshot this month, but we can tell you about the one we printed last time. Remember the cyan affair with the plan view of the school? Well, it was the **Skateboard Construction System** from Players.

The first person to rung us was Ian McLiddy from Aberdeen, who rang up about half-an-hour after the magazine hit the streets. Congrats to Ian, who we believe is still in intensive caree after a telephone kiss from Tamara. If anyone wants to see a pic of **SCS,** you should have ruddy well bought the last issue, shouldn't you?



Going underground da na da da da na na naaaa Goin' underground. Well yes. You blummin' well will be going underground with **Corporation** from Activision. Underground with EXCITEMENT!!! Yes, it's another game all about digging holes all over the place and mining and things. It's a bit strategic, but we won't hold that against them. Anyway, all the twizzly wizzly menus and graphics (look) should well make up for it.

VIX

Phwoooaar! as the male members of the SU team have been dribbling for months. **Vixen's** arrived, and since the boize have been subjected to accelerated pulse rates and sweaty palms for months as the promo items came flooding into the office, I took it upon myself to write the review. Well, we don't want them keeling over from heart attacks now, do we?

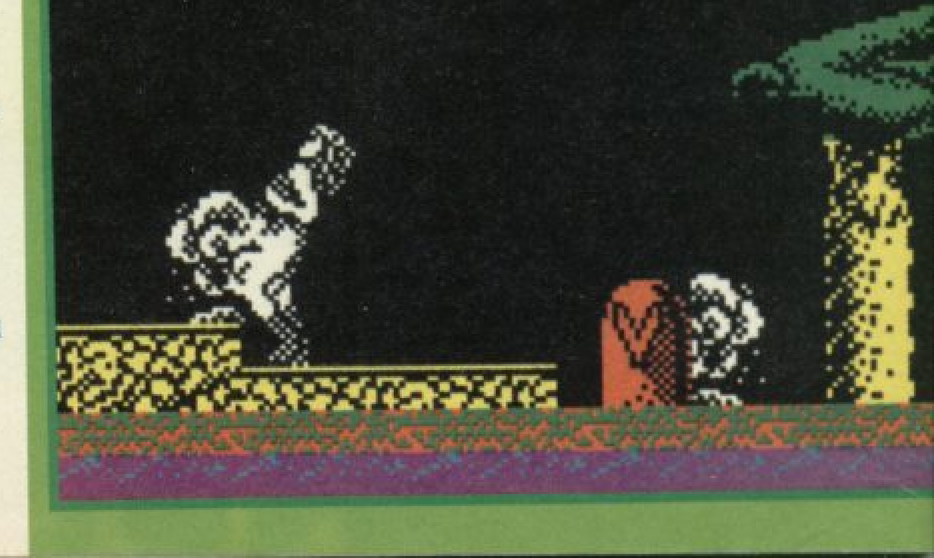
The plot behind **Vixen** is dull in the extreme, as these things often are, and is a thinly disguised feminine version of the Tarzan story, swapping boy for girl and monkeys for foxes. **Vixen,** brought up in the jungles of Granath by the wiley foxes is the only thing close enough to a human being left on the planet, and so it's up to her to clear the place of the nasty mutant dinosaurs.

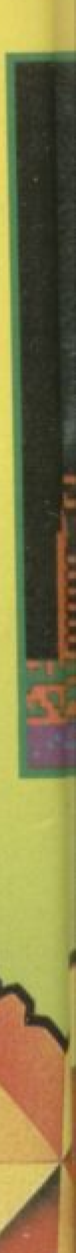
The nasty mutant dinosaurs (hereafter referred to as the NMDs, not to be confused with OMD who were a relatively successful band in the early 80s) can only be disposed of by a good whipping (if I hear one person go, 'fnar' there'll be trouble Douglas) and thus Vixen, dressed in an entirely impractical jungle bikini, is armed with a handy large whip. So off she goes, joggin' along and she's whippin' the NMDs left right and centre. Some of them closely resemble Itsy and Bitsy; the spiders from that kids' TV programme yonks ago, some of them look like jelly fish with rheumatoid arthritis. Either way, whip 'em quick (some of them take more than one whip, so beware) and whip anything else which comes your way. Stones and funny gourd things will hide extra points, in the shape of gemstones which can be collected, a mega whip (DOUGLAS! be quiet at the back there) and fox time, which is represented by a fox head (peculiarly enough) and is thoroughly useful on the bonus round when you turn into a fox.

Ah. Not only was **Vixen** brought up by the wiley foxes, but she also has the ability to metamorphise into a fox herself and run around underground collecting extra gems for bonus points. Nice trick, I'm sure that I'd find it thoroughly useful whilst travelling on the Tube.

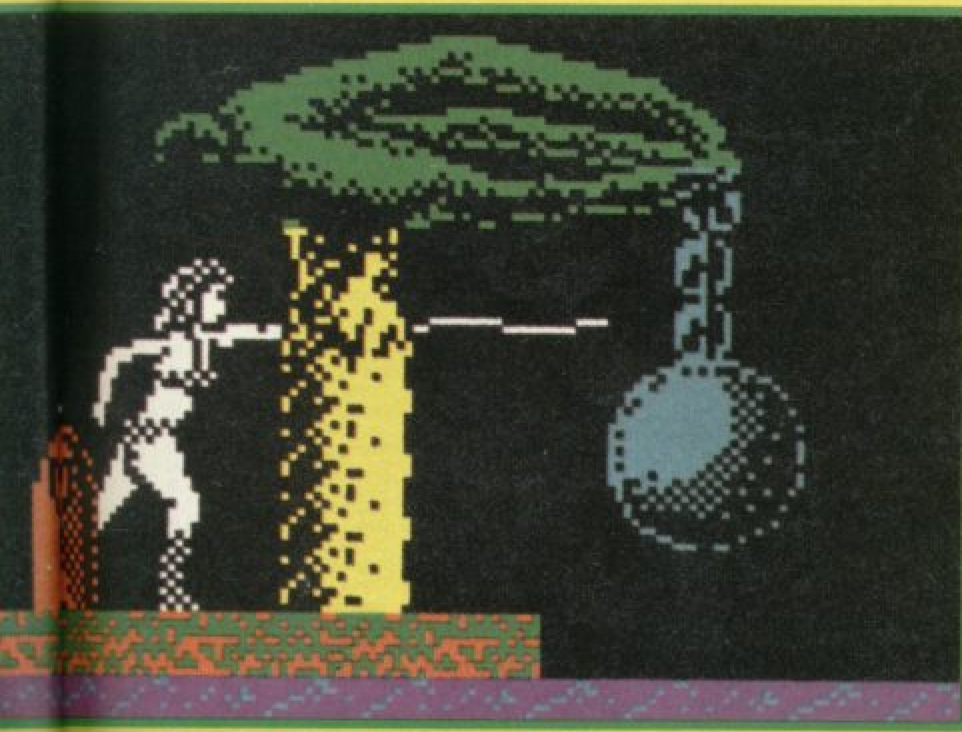
Gameplay throughout is fairly standard, what we have here is a horizontally scrolling whipping game with things to leap over, things to fall down and things not to bump into. Although with protuberances like **Vixen's** it's going to be hard . . .

The central figure is actually very well animated. The girlie trots along at a rather sedate jog, hair flapping nicely in the breeze, and she's got a good reach with her whip. This is all perfectly acceptable whilst she's above ground, but once she gets into the caves, well, it's another thing entirely. Crouching down, the poor girl has to walk like a large orang utan, knuckles dragging on the ground, until she reaches a spot suitable for a spot of metamorphasising. The change into the fox is done nicely, but





ARCADE REVIEW



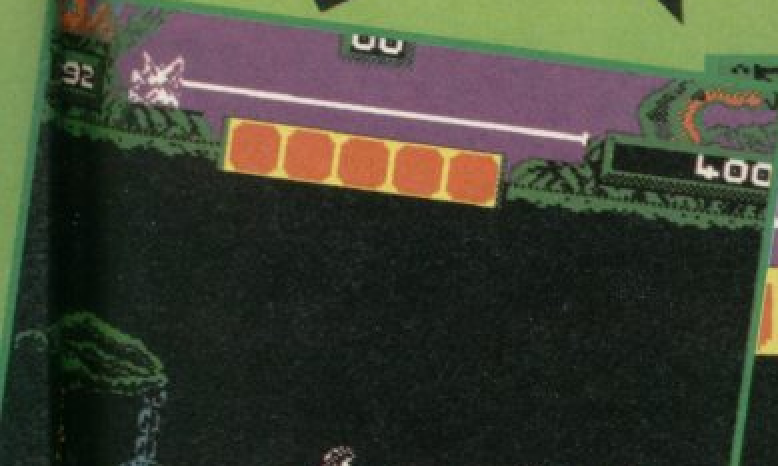
once she's become the fox things deteriorate. It's a piddly little sprite (how Corinne managed to squeeze herself into that tiny little outfit I'll never know), and the running movement isn't very convincing. As for the jumping, my life, it looks as though the poor little mammal has been squashed by a JCB. You could wear it round your neck as a ruff.

Out you get from the caves, change back into Corinne, I mean **Vixen,** and off you go. Do the whole thing over again. Jungle, jungle, NMD, NMD, whip, whip, whip. Easy. And that's yer lot. Nothing else happens.

And it's a tad dull after about ten minutes. Superficially a very pretty game with some very nice animation (loadsa digitised pieces of Corinne running around studion in Holborn, so we're told), but the gameplay is too similar to other, better games on the market. I cite **Thundercats** and rest my case. It's a shame really, because had there been a little more variety within the gameplay, **Vixen** would have gone down in my book as a top-notch game. Perhaps a tad less Bimbo and a touch more gameplay next time chaps – still worth a look, if you like girlies in bikinis with large whips fnar, titter, barf etc . . .■









STOP PRESS REVIEW STOP PRESS

FAXBOX

Well animated whipping game, although the gameplay is lacking. Still, worth a look

Label: Martech
Author: McArdle/Richards
Price: £8.99/£14.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: Kempston/ Sinclair

Reviewer: Tamara Howard

★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ 7

TELL IT TO THE BEAR!



Dear Kamikaze,
I can't bear it! My newsagent keeps selling out of Sinclair User before I get my hands on it. What can I do? *(Desperate, Lincs)*

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LIFT PANEL TO REVEAL LEG ▶









Fantastic! Last month's Caption Competition got zillions and zillions of entries, and they were mostly of a higher level of funniness than usual. Many of the entries were unprintable. For example, we couldn't possibly have printed Matthew Purkis' entry which was, "Could you please stop playing with my thing, I'm trying to concentrate." Luckily we could print David Haffner's offering, which had Bond saying, "Damn, now I can't see where Mickey Mouse's hands are!" but it wasn't quite the winner.

Best of all in our opinion was this, from Bradley Howe, who caught the actual posture completely with, "I'm afraid we're done for darling – I've lost my contact lens."■

Gremlin

Well we decided to give you another easy picture to work on this month. Behold ex-Goodie, funster and bird watcher Bill Oddie being completely stupid, "discovering the modern way to promote conservation." "Discovering a modern way to look like a dork," we'd say. Anyway, what's he saying, thinking, doing or what is the computer saying, thinking or doing? Closing date is end of May■



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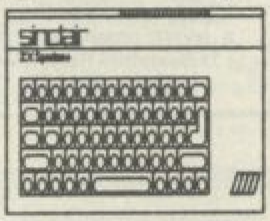
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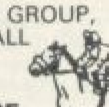
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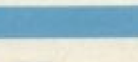
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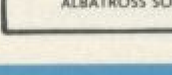
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